

*Sigurd Olson once said, "history means the warmth of human associations...
while great events may find their place in books and museums, it is the
people themselves who really counted."*

Photo: Conservation director E.F. Swift (center) talking over matters pertaining to the Farm Forest Field day.

Failures, while sometimes embarrassing, are important learning experiences that ultimately strengthened programs and the character of those who ran them. Most of the information in this chapter is presented in brief summary form. A few narratives like Turkey and Deer reproductions are more detailed because the stories have never been told before, and I felt the individuals involved deserved special mention. It should be pointed out that the thoughts presented are those of the author's based upon archival and personal experiences over the past 35 years. Others undoubtedly would have different views—very understandable considering the subject and the thousands that had a hand in it.

Agency Evolution The imitative original thoughts and innovative ideas of Aldo Leopold began one of the most enduring conservation efforts ever initiated in Wisconsin. Isaac Walton League (Ikes) officers Frank Graess and William "Bill" Aberg contributed as well. Collectively, they drafted the 1927 legislation that created the Wisconsin Conservation Department. Long ideas obtained from Michigan and Pennsylvania. Wisconsin's Conservation Act of 1927 established the framework for a new state agency and its related policy body, the Wisconsin Conservation Commission. No doubt Leopold's thinking drove the effort, but it took attorney Aberg's touch to produce a sound law proposal. The Conservation Act was clearly a pivotal event in conservation history, but it also involved a failure that probably slowed agency progress and may well have permanently altered program direction. Leopold and the Ikes had a clear vision about who should serve on the new Conservation Commission. They carefully prepared a slate of 20 highly qualified candidates including Leopold. When they presented the list to Governor Zimmerman, Aberg urged the appointment of Leopold as director of the new Wisconsin Conservation Department (WCD). The Ikes had worked very hard to help Zimmerman get elected. It was a heated campaign, and Zimmerman used a strong conservation platform to attract votes. In private meetings with Zimmerman and his staff, the Ikes were led to believe their recommendations for commissioners and agency director on the appointments. Nothing from the truth because none were implemented. Later, the working very hard on the next thing Zimmerman out of office. To wait more than 15 years influence on agency policy. The commission later did both Conservation Hall of Fame relates to Leopold's idea about position free from political the conservation commission. Game Police in 1936, the agency's their own chief executive is compromised, the whole Thompson changed the author secretary position from the the governor's Office in 1995 acre wetland located in Dodge in east central Wisconsin had game for Native Americans tenth century. Called "Cranberry bog" by the Indians, its rich organic soils attracted early European settlers in the late 1800s for agriculture. During the early 1900s, modern steam-driven equipment allowed farmers and drainage. One man was instrumental in stopping that effort and saving one of the last un-drained swamps in the north. His name was Louis Radke—a conservation warden and sportsman whose forthright actions and statewide campaigns were instrumental in saving this internationally important resource. Speaking at the Ikes like addressed numerous meetings around the state from 1923 to 1927, touting the huge potential fish and game values for saving a marsh that had been plundered by agriculture. His efforts were successful in influencing the state and federal governments to purchase and preserve this natural resource. The success story of what became the 30,000-acre Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area in Wisconsin was also a triumph for Wisconsin conservation. About two thirds of the northern portion is the Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area, which is the largest of its kind in the world. The southern end is the Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area, managed by the state. The project is a traditional migrating Canada goose population and diverse natural landscape and wildlife, nature trails, and educational centers are state and national treasures. Protecting predators from the swamp management had public support because they were livestock and competed too efficiently with humans for game. This popular idea was ultimately endorsed as soon as European settlement of America began. Establishing laws to protect the Hudson's Bay Company and its fur more than 150 years, but it wasn't considered a success story. Early scientists and scholars backed the bounty idea with theories about how devastating predators could be on wild populations. Aldo Leopold had the same idea early in his professional career. But that changed when he began to see that predators had a vital role in controlling certain prairie species. He ultimately observed that predators were an integral part of the ecosystem for keeping the game healthy (the story challenging to sportsmen). Leopold's famous encounter with a wolf pack his hunting party shot was the pivotal event in his life and forever changed his philosophy about predators. When four rifle were killed, the old wolf was down, and a pup was dragging a leg into impassable slide rocks. He reached the old wolf in time to watch the fierce jaws fore



Chapter 12

People Along the Way: Heros, Mentors, and Friends

rested in gaining the expanded marsh licensing and research. The Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area is a state and national treasure. The success story of what became the 30,000-acre Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area in Wisconsin was also a triumph for Wisconsin conservation. About two thirds of the northern portion is the Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area, which is the largest of its kind in the world. The southern end is the Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area, managed by the state. The project is a traditional migrating Canada goose population and diverse natural landscape and wildlife, nature trails, and educational centers are state and national treasures. Protecting predators from the swamp management had public support because they were livestock and competed too efficiently with humans for game. This popular idea was ultimately endorsed as soon as European settlement of America began. Establishing laws to protect the Hudson's Bay Company and its fur more than 150 years, but it wasn't considered a success story. Early scientists and scholars backed the bounty idea with theories about how devastating predators could be on wild populations. Aldo Leopold had the same idea early in his professional career. But that changed when he began to see that predators had a vital role in controlling certain prairie species. He ultimately observed that predators were an integral part of the ecosystem for keeping the game healthy (the story challenging to sportsmen). Leopold's famous encounter with a wolf pack his hunting party shot was the pivotal event in his life and forever changed his philosophy about predators. When four rifle were killed, the old wolf was down, and a pup was dragging a leg into impassable slide rocks. He reached the old wolf in time to watch the fierce jaws fore



Deer committee inspecting Finke Deer Yard with Ashland County Sportsmen, 1948.

Sigurd Olson once said, “history means the warmth of human associations... while great events may find their place in books and museums, it is the people themselves who really counted.” This author echoes Sig’s view and also submits “it’s the characters that give the agency character.” Memorable wildlifers like Leopold, Grange, and the Hamerstoms mixed with Don “Bubba” Bublitz, Glen Kloes, Sam Moore, and Doris Rusch helped weave the rug of the profession that Leopold said would “not just warm the feet but add color pleasing to the eye and heart.”

It was the combination of people, a mixture of very talented and colorful individuals who built the profession of wildlife management. This group consisted of scholars, scientists, thinkers, and strategists. They were also blue-collar workers: laborers, conservation aids, and wildlife technicians. In the early years, many of the workers did not have a high school diploma. Later, a master’s degree was the standard academic training for biologists with a few Ph.D.s thrown into the mix. Who’s to say who the most important contributors were or who was the most influential?

Wisconsin’s Conservation Hall of Fame in Stevens Point honors great men and women who have provided outstanding contributions to the conservation cause. Historian Walter Scott listed 100 retired and 100 deceased conservationists as his tribute to great individuals during a 1967 speech celebrating a century of conservation. Outdoor writer Tim Eisele published an article entitled “The Century’s Honor Roll” in the December/January 2000 issue of *Wisconsin Outdoor Journal* that identified what he thought were the best conservation contributors in the last 100 years.

The Bureau of Wildlife Management’s selection of “Wildlife Manager/Biologist of the Year” and “Wildlife Technician of the Year” categories certainly identified important contributors to wildlife conservation (Appendix H). While all of these people are deserving of special recognition, it took the collective effort of every individual who ever served as a warden, laborer, conservation aid, game technician, wildlife technician, game manager, wildlife manager, wildlife biologist, researcher, and wildlife administrator to produce a successful program.

The stories within this chapter will give you a glimpse of the personalities involved in the profession. These side-stories are not intended to be about the “best of the best” in the agency, although some famous names will be involved. Rather, they will identify more of the rank and file folks who made the agency function and become a national leader in the field of wildlife management. Some stories are about characters, some about unusual events, and some are just about amusing happenings. The storytelling will give the reader a kind of a behind-the-scenes look at the people who produced the spirit and camaraderie of what the old timers called “the outfit.”

Brush Cops (Popple Cops)

There is no doubt that the state's first game managers were conservation wardens. These rugged individuals deserve credit and high praise for their dedicated work protecting the state's vital natural resources, especially its fish and game. Law enforcement's own historical writings rightfully honor Ernie Swift, Harley MacKenzie, and many Haskell Noyes Award winners, but every field warden should be cited for their outstanding wildlife conservation work.

Wardens couldn't be all things to all people, so it's a good thing game and fish managers came along when they did. It allowed "brush cops" to spend more time being cops. Eventually (my guess is after 1980), most wardens came to accept these managers as team members. Many game managers carried warden credentials over the years and committed considerable time to aiding their local warden. When 240-hour training became mandatory in 1972, however, most turned in their badges because they could not make that commitment or didn't like certain aspects of the training. Some were "grandfathered in" or remained active by completing the training in small chunks each year.

The cooperation between the two programs continued to improve in the 1980s and 1990s, probably helped by retirements and the hiring of more college-trained wardens. Bureau-level cooperation was always good, and guys like Don Beghin, John Plenke, Sr., Ralph Christenson, Tom Harelson, Harold Hettrick, Rollie Lee, Harland Steinhorst, Homer Moe, Dale Morey, Harley Lichtenwalner, Jim Chizek, Larry Keith, Doug Hoskins, Tom Solin, and John Daniel were always supportive.

Field warden cooperation was a bit more variable depending more on personality than program bias. When six-foot six-inch Larry Kriese, Roy Kubisiak, or Donald Knoke spoke in favor of some game program, people tended to listen. Pat Berhans at Horicon personally welcomed every game manager who helped with Canada goose enforcement and had them giggling with a hundred "you won't believe" stories. Skip Cloutier's hardnosed field tactics but softhearted coffee chats blazed the way for improved communications and respect between the programs.

While only a few conservation wardens are mentioned in the material that follows, which admittedly is biased by personal friendships, don't construe the short list as an indicator that these were the only ones who helped along the way. Any attempt to include all of those who cooperated with their local wildlife manager or contributed to the management program would be too voluminous.

Chauncy

In the early 1950s, most wardens openly resented game managers because they thought these college-trained rookies were intruding on their territory. Probably the deeper rub was that these new "game guys" were taking over some of the fun parts of their job. However, one individual in their ranks who always preached cooperation said, "I always worked for the good of the department, not just the Law Enforcement Division." That warden's name is Chauncy Weitz.

Chauncy was a field warden in the 1940s promoted to law enforcement supervisor at Black River Falls in the 1950s and early 1960s. His cooperative spirit along with an unusual office mix of researchers, game men, fish men, foresters, and game supervisor Stan DeBoer produced a group with an esprit de corps widely known around the state as a team that got things done.

Chauncy took credit for being the first to recognize the relationship between car-killed deer and deer population fluctuations. Most importantly, Chauncy facilitated a reevaluation of the deer kill report system used at the time. He thought the mail-in cards that were used tended to inflate the kill figures, and he pushed strongly for some sort of in-field registration. After some research of the methods used by other states, Chauncy, Stan DeBoer, and Burt Dahlberg went to Colorado and brought back the idea of deer registration, which was implemented in 1953.

When interviewed at 93 years old and in failing health, as he spoke, his voice still showed the excitement he must have had at Black River Falls so many years ago. He



Conservation warden, Harley W. MacKenzie, with confiscated articles from game law violators in 1918.



Chauncy Weitz.

The Gamekeepers

recalled that one of his proudest moments was at a Conservation Commission meeting in the early 1940s when Leopold shook his hand for speaking out for progressive deer management despite an unruly crowd.

Chauncy died in 2004. Chauncy's son David worked for the DNR as a public relations specialist out of the West Central Region in Eau Claire and passed away in 2007.

Palmer

Jim Palmer was a field warden early in his career starting out in Jefferson County in 1961 and in Superior from 1962 to 1969. He became a patrol pilot stationed in Madison in 1970 and was promoted to chief pilot in 1974. Jim flew many game managers and researchers on dizzying, low altitude flights for various game surveys during these years. Vomiting was the norm, and Jim recalled that I had a "two bagger" over Wauzeka while searching for turkeys in 1971.

Known for his night flying skills, Jim had the uncanny ability to direct wardens below to pursue vehicles through complex road and field routes into the path of some unsuspecting deer shiner. An inner ear difficulty eventually grounded Jim in 1979, so he became a covert investigator for law enforcement. Four years later, he was chief of special investigations. He retired from state service in 1989.

Jim told many entertaining stories in his book, *Game Wardens Versus Poachers – Tickets Still Available*. However, one he told in the 1995 issue of the state's *Game Warden* publication in an article entitled "Gentleman, gentleman..." was one of the funniest. After a laborious sorting of license stubs obtained from the county clerk and comparisons with the state tax rolls, Jim identified a Mr. Eisenman as a fraudulent license holder. He soon found out the man lived in California and sent a series of letters advising him to pay his fine or face arrest. Mr. Eisenman didn't respond.

Months later, Jim was watching Johnny Carson on the *Tonight Show* and was entertained by a trio of German shepherds who did all kinds of fantastic tricks but would always sit and look at their master when he said, "Gentleman, gentleman..." Jim pricked up his ears when he heard the marvelous dog trainer's name was Eisenman. While intrigued that it could be the very violator he had been after, Jim decided to chalk it up to coincidence.

A few days before Christmas, Jim happened to stop by the Superior post office to pick up his mail and was surprised to see five German shepherds sniffing around in the lobby. Before he could take it all in, he heard a distinctive voice call out, "Gentlemen, gentlemen..." It only took Jim a few minutes to retrieve the old warrant from his car!

Jim Palmer and his wife, Gaye, are retired on a small ranch outside of Silver City, New Mexico. Jim is an accomplished author and sculptor. He is also an ardent horseman, having ridden horses his entire adult life including a national champion. He and Gaye have ridden in most western states as well as in Spain and several places in Europe.

Big John

John Plenke, Sr. grew up in Wisconsin Rapids, earned a B.S. degree in forestry and biology from UW-Stevens Point in 1957, and worked as a forester for Consolidated Paper in Rhinelander and Loretta for a few years. After a short stint in the State Patrol from 1962 to 1965, he resigned to become a conservation warden in December 1965.

John became the Walworth County warden in 1966, law enforcement safety specialist at Madison (Nevin Fish Hatchery) in 1972, Madison Area warden in 1975, and was promoted to the head of the law enforcement Hunter's Safety Program in 1977. He missed the warden field activity, so he transferred to become the Northwest District warden supervisor in 1981 and retired in 1991.

John was a fun-loving guy who made friends wherever he went. Sportsmen respected him as a fair-minded enforcement officer despite receiving copious quantities of citations from him. I first met John when I appeared to represent game management at my first spring fish and game hearing in 1968. It was a time when shooting does was still a very sensitive topic.



Jim Palmer.

COURTESY OF J. PALMER



John Plenke, Sr.

DNR FILE

The hearing participants jeered as I stumbled through a feeble explanation of the variable quota system. I was very flustered by the unruly crowd and very appreciative when big John intervened. He said, "Now just settle down boys! This guy is new to this area so give him a chance to speak. He is a professional game manager. These guys know what they're doing with the deer herd, and you need to listen to them." There was no trouble with the rest of the agenda.

John's career path also crossed mine in 1972 when I became the area game manager in Madison. John was the area warden and, again, supported the game program as vigorously there as he did in Walworth County. We both advanced to bureau-level staff about the same time, and John continued to extend an unusual amount of cooperation with the Game Management Bureau. When one of my responsibilities became drafting administrative rules and publishing the regulations pamphlets, John not only proofread each draft but also helped me set up a system of rule screening by field wardens.

One highlight of this relationship was when John invited me to attend a hunter safety workshop in North Carolina in 1978. We were entertained by a verbal battle between an anti-hunter and a biologist, which had the audience of wardens and state hunter safety coordinators angry, frustrated, and a bit confused. It turned out that the anti-hunter who spoke was also the biologist, but when he changed clothes and character directly in front of the audience, most were so angry they never recognized the switch.

Nationwide, there was a growing anti-hunter sentiment being expressed in the news media. Plenke saw the educational value of enlightening Wisconsin sportsmen on this issue and talked me into playing the two parts. John set up several statewide hunter education sessions, and I gave dozens of presentations of "Dr. Gerald Davis vs. Dave Gjestson" to audiences up to 500 in size. It was very effective in demonstrating the emotional side of this issue (some expressed at my peril) as well as preparing hunters for the fight to come.

John and his wife Connie retired to Montana where he enjoys knife making, hunter education instruction, and gun show vending along with hunting, fishing, and a lot of story telling.

Hettrick

No matter what your opinion was of law enforcement, you had to embrace this guy. He was sincere, had a great sense of humor, was professionally dedicated, possessed a big heart, was a devoted friend of the Mississippi River, and a consummate duck hunter. His name was Harold Hettrick, and he was a man's man. When he died February 1, 2004, a friend speaking at his over-flowing church funeral called him "Wisconsin's John Wayne."

Hettrick started for the Wisconsin Conservation Department as a part-time researcher in 1949 but became a full-time conservation warden at Friendship and Appleton from 1950 to 1957. He became the chief enforcement-training officer in 1957 and served for 10 years before being promoted to assistant chief warden. He was the first warden to graduate from the FBI Academy in 1960.

Probably not too many people knew that Hettrick was a World War II navy veteran and a 1950 graduate of the University of Wisconsin in agriculture. You wouldn't know it because of his tobacco-chewing, red-neck ways, but he was a very bright and caring person who supported The Nature Conservancy, Olbrich Gardens in Madison, the 32nd Degree Masonic Learning Center, The Humane Society, and Habitat For Humanity for many years.

After his retirement in 1982, Hettrick attended the Ex-Cons (retired conservation personnel) monthly luncheons, always making a speech about the great fishing or great hunting on the "Great River." In the fall of 2001, he retrieved a duck for me as he was heading by an island Chuck Pils and I were hunting. His Labrador was in the bow of his boat as he approached me with the retrieved bird. When he recognized Chuck and I, he exploded with expletives and proceeded to chew us out for not having a dog!

Harold Hettrick was a good man and devoted father of six children with his wife of 52 years, LaJeane. He was a dedicated state employee, a pretty good fisherman, and an avid duck hunter. He passed on to the Big River in 2004.



Harold Hettrick.

The Gamekeepers

A Young Legend

Becoming a legend is usually associated with age. As special events and heroic deeds piled up over the years, a legend is born. Not so with this man. With only a few years in the warden ranks, he had experienced so many life-threatening events and garnered so many awards, he became a type of legend-maker that may never happen again in conservation law enforcement. His name is John Buss.

Buss started for the department in 1984 at 22 years of age. After the usual indoctrination tour of various field stations, he got his first permanent station working out of his home in Sauk County. Now understand that Buss is one of the nicest individuals you would want to meet. He's a six-foot two-inch, good-looking dude with a quiet voice and smile that quickly wins friends. Every department employee who ever worked with him liked him and commented on his congenial nature. Knowing how pleasant this warden was to be around, explaining his first few years with the agency as "fisticuffs, knife fights, and gun play" would seem like make-believe stuff, but it's true. However, all his life adventures seem mild when compared to a chilling event impacting this young warden on September 16, 1985.

Buss had been a warden for just 18 months. Like every state warden, his credentials gave him regular police powers, so he assisted local enforcement agencies on a regular basis. The cooperation this day would affect the man for the rest of his life.

Buss assisted a local police department officer in intercepting a man thought to be carrying a pickup truck full of marijuana. After a tussle with the driver, Buss was searching the back of the arrested man's truck when a loud shot rang out. Quickly turning, he was horrified as he watched the police officer shoot the prone victim in the head with a .357 magnum! After breathlessly talking the policeman out of shooting Buss himself, he ran to his vehicle and called for backup. His testimony later was largely responsible for the police officer being incarcerated for "homicide due to mental defect."

Back on the job, the Sauk County warden's adventures didn't end. Over the next few years, he was tested further. A routine license check of a hunter turned violent when the man took a swing at Buss. He took him down and threw him in jail. A littering stop turned ugly when Buss found the fishing tackle box between one of the passenger's legs contained a sawed-off 16 gauge! Later, a police officer's shotgun blast through a house wall barely missed the young warden.

Throughout this early period, Buss drew constant praise from his supervisors and the public. Newspapers regularly announced some great thing he was doing for the school or the community project. His DNR district has named him "warden of the year" so many times they might as well make it automatic each year. His investigations uncovered major poaching activities numerous times and led to huge fines and jail time for the offenders.

Now in his 40s, John Buss is, in fact, legendary. He thoroughly enjoys his job, especially working deer, turkey, sturgeon, and ginseng cases. When asked about personal ego, John replied that his philosophy came from his mom and dad and his solid upbringing in a working-class family. He added, "I'm only as good as the people that support me. I owe a lot to the DNR people I work with, fellow wardens, and the citizens of Sauk County."

John Buss is modest about his accomplishments but is truly legendary in his region of the state as well as among his peers.

Game Men... and Women

While the "game man" terminology is not politically correct today, it was when the profession first started because women were not employed. The early literature was replete with references to game men, field men, or just plain men. When Aldo Leopold launched the profession in 1928, it was an all-male work force, and it continued that way for 50 years.

It also took about 50 years for the new profession to gain identity with the public. Initially the men were called wardens or rangers, and the game manager title didn't stick until the 1960s. It wasn't until the 1980s that people began to call them wildlife



John Buss.

COURTESY OF J. BUSS

managers. After reorganization in 1996, the title changed to wildlife biologist. Interestingly, even into the new millennium, many locals still called the person assigned to their area “my game manager.”

In the early days, there was a mix of colorful people who took the edge off the seriousness of the job. With politicians seemingly always criticizing the agency and the public accusing state employees of being lazy pigs feeding at the public trough, morale boosting was needed at frequent intervals. This was necessary to keep game managers working nights and weekends for no additional pay, but there was a lot of personal satisfaction that they were doing the best job they could for wildlife and the public.

Women pioneers were first hired by the agency in the wildlife research field but at a very slow rate. Ruth Hine was the first in 1949, followed by Fran Hamerstrom in 1950 (a University of Wisconsin employee earlier). It wasn't until the 1980s that female researchers arrived in appreciable numbers.

Diana Hallett became the first female game manager when hired by Kent Klepinger in 1977; her story appears on page 382. She was only with the Wisconsin DNR for a short time, but she left a positive impression on everyone. She was hired by the Missouri Department of Conservation as a research biologist in August 1978.

There was quite a gap in the hiring of female wildlife managers after Hallett left the agency. Four years went by before Doris Rusch and Cindy Swanberg were hired in September 1982. Genny Fannucchi replaced Tom Hauge at Spring Green in February 1985. Many more followed later and are noted in the appendices.

Georgie Porgie

Throughout the history of the program, one name surfaces above all others when anecdotal stories are told about characters in the profession. The stories about this man were so colorful that he became legendary, even though he was just an average guy trying to make a living. His name was George Curran.

George started for the WCD in November 1937 as a junior conservation warden. He entered the game management ranks as a laborer assigned to the Pittman-Robertson deer project. After a few more job changes as a conservation aid and deputy conservation warden, he became a game manager on June 1, 1948. Stories began to circulate about George's poor memory and absent-minded mistakes just a few years into his game management career. Fred Zimmerman—who created nicknames for many early employees—applied the “Georgie Porgie” moniker.

The classic story told by just about everyone that knew Curran was called ‘the canoe incident.’ When he was the district game manger in Hayward, he was attending a staff meeting when a friend noticed George seemed out-of-sorts. When asked what the problem was, George said “My wife, Enid, drove into the garage with the boat on top of the car and smashed it.” A few months later, George himself drove into his repaired garage with a canoe on top of his car repeating Enid's damage to the garage and destroying the canoe!

Most people thought George had outdone himself when they heard about the outcome of his vacation with his wife. He arrived home tired but with the strange feeling that something was wrong. The telephone was ringing when he entered the house, and he ran across the living room to answer it. It was his wife. She was extremely upset with him because he had left her at a gas station in Superior!

There were many other tales about George. Running out of gas three times in 10 days, forgetting important meetings, and breaking his foot while disciplining his dog. He once caused a fire at a gas station when he drove off with the hose still in his car's fill-pipe.

His stories came to an end on October 31, 1961. Invited to the Mississippi River to hunt ducks by long-time game supervisor Harry Stroebe, George and his wife stopped to look at some ducks feeding in a flooded backwater. Unable to see well because it was sleeting, George left his wife in the car and walked down the railroad tracks for a closer look. With his parka hood up, he didn't hear the approaching train and was killed. You could say he died the way he lived!



George Curran was the subject of more lore than any other game manager.

The Gamekeepers

Brain Man

One of the many Georges who worked for the department along the way was George Hartman. About anyone who worked around George during this period identified him as “the brains of the outfit.” Tall and thin but well conditioned from timber cruising and hard work, he made a permanent mark on the landscape for the betterment of wildlife.

George received a degree in forestry from the University of Michigan in 1938. After earning his master’s degree from Michigan and successfully defending his thesis on the *Life History and Management of the Fox Squirrel* in 1940, he joined the WCD as a forest ranger at Black River Falls at a salary of \$125 per month. A short time later, he became a senior conservation aid working in the Central Wisconsin Conservation Area (Black River State Forest and Meadow Valley Wildlife Area) for the same pay.

George recalled his first meeting with the local WCD mechanic, Art “Pete” Peterson, as less than cordial. Old Pete had come up through the ranks and didn’t have a very high opinion of college boy rangers. He was polite when they visited, but George said, “his reserves were evident.” During the conversation, Pete opened a box of Copenhagen chewing tobacco and, with a glint in his eye, offered some to George. “When I took a chew,” George said, “Pete almost swallowed his! Heck, I grew up in a sawmill town, so I could handle a lip of ‘snoose’ since I was 12 years old!”

George missed out on advancing as a biologist because of agency budget constraints, but his friend Ralph “Hoppy” Hopkins got a junior biologist job on the deer project. Years later, George said, “Hoppy’s monthly salary increased from \$85 a month to \$150—movie star wages!”

George ultimately got a biologist position and served as the Black River Falls area biologist through the 1950s under Stan DeBoer until promoted to the Madison staff in 1964 as the big game supervisor. He developed great skill at predicting the annual deer kill and was within 5% of the actual kill in 1966 and 1967.

He predicted the 1968 kill to come in at 120,000. When the actual figures for that year were tabulated, the count was 119,986. When George realized 14 late deer stubs from the Apostle Islands needed to be added, he knew he’d have to lie to the press because they’d never believe him....exactly 120,000! Although George dutifully submitted the late kill stubs, the tabulating secretary forgot to add to them to the official kill figures. George didn’t have to lie after all.

After serving the final seven years of a 36-year career as the department Pittman-Robertson coordinator, George Hartman retired in 1977. He died on January 6, 2010.

Bersing

Otis Bersing was the type of state employee who had great impact on the public and those around him but whose low profile made him so obscure he simply vanished when he retired in 1966. He represents the many game managers who worked hard their entire careers to help wildlife and serve the public but received very little notoriety.

Bersing started for the WCD as a laborer working on stream improvement projects in 1934 for \$4 a day. A college degree eventually won him a junior biologist job at Tomahawk in 1936. He was promoted to the Game Division staff in 1943.

In the late 1940s, Bersing coordinated a federal tree and shrub project called Project 19-D. The habitat development project was carried out in the western part of the state by Frank King, in the south by Earl Loyster, and in the east by Harry Stroebe. Some of the project’s cedar and shrub plantings alongside Bad Fish Creek in Dane County can still be seen today. Stroebe recalled years later that Bersing often ended a long workday with the suggestion, “Now, let’s find a place and have a goatskin of lager.”

Bersing’s true talent was historical writing. In the 1940s, many of his articles in the *Conservation Bulletin* were about wildlife history. His deer season writings were extremely detailed, and he wrote about deer season results with public education in mind. In the 1950s, Bersing compiled a huge amount of historical facts about deer hunting that the WCD finally published in 1956 under the title *A Century of Wisconsin Deer*. The new deer book instantly became the prime reference book for game managers statewide and was the first comprehensive book for the public, combining



Otis Bersing as he appeared in the 1950s.

Wisconsin deer history, deer harvest statistics, important regulations, and deer hunting trends. A second edition of the book, published in 1966, updated the statistics. His retirement ended the book's update future.

Otis Bersing died on October 9, 1978.

Dahlberg and Red

A great rivalry existed between northern and southern game managers. The premise was that north of the tension zone (the area where northern and southern vegetation meet), managers claimed to be the real tenders of wildlife. They spent most of their time in the field and were most proud of their ability to avoid paperwork. On the other hand, southern managers worked mostly with people and paperwork, spending much less time in the field. Therefore, southern managers obviously knew less about wildlife...or so the story goes.

Burt Dahlberg worked in the north his entire career, first as a laborer and conservation aid in the early 1940s, becoming a game manager in 1946, and then a conservation biologist on the Pittman-Robertson deer project from 1948 to 1950. He co-authored the classic book *The White-tailed Deer in Wisconsin* with Ralph Guettinger in 1956. He became the game supervisor in northwestern Wisconsin after the deer project and served until his retirement in 1978.

Dahlberg received a lot of deserved credit for his deer work but should have received more recognition for his wildlife management on the land. His area of supervision involved several very talented game managers and covered 12 counties. County forests that he covered included several 100,000-acre chunks of habitat that involved ecosystem management before the term was invented. Rare wildlife including bald eagles, ospreys, and fishers received special attention long before endangered species laws were in place.

Burt Dahlberg died on September 22, 1985.

John "Red" Davis worked briefly as a game manager (forest development supervisor) out of Spooner before leaving to work for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. While he worked for the state, he was a friend of Art Doll, and their antics sometimes upset Dahlberg. In the 1950s, some unknown author wrote the following poem that was published in the Spooner newspaper. Some speculated that Davis and Doll collaborated on it.

An Ode to the Great Northern Manager, or Which Verse is Worse?

Hurrah for the Northwest Area
It's perfect, a program to laud;
Where Davis speaks only to Dahlberg
And Dahlberg speaks only to God.
Consider their management program:
The best in the state, it's said too,
But try as you might to see how it
Adds up is a tough thing to do.
It's hard to develop ideas,
The mysteries all have been solved;
Managers work by the numbers,
And don't get the public involved.
There's not much to do about
sharptails,
They're downhill and practically done;
It's too far up north for the pheasants,
And stocking was never much fun.
There always will be lots of partridge,
So no need to give them much time;

They've got a few quail, but no matter,
They'll die in this far northern clime.
The squirrels and the coons and
the rabbits,
Their numbers must somehow have
grown,
So leave them alone and they'll find
that
They get along well on their own.
The beaver and otter and muskrat
Do damage without a request,
But that's why they have those state
trappers
To let all the district men rest.
They've got some big waterfowl
areas
Developed as they could afford;
Whether or not the ducks will
increase
From now on is up to the Lord.

The deer are a bit of a problem,
A slight overstocking is there,
But since they can't get enough
hunters,
There's no need to give them a care.
The black bear could be quite an item,
Their numbers are growing, you know,
But hunting went well; they're
astonished!
So plans out the window must go.
There's no more to say of their
program,
Land buying is now the hard core;
Who cares if it has no good purpose?
If it's cheap, let's buy up some more!
So what of the manager's future?
The glory road now can unfold:
Just make it look good in the papers,
Relax, and grow gracefully old.

—by the Great Expectator

The Gamekeepers

Stroebe

Harry Stroebe graduated from the University of Minnesota majoring in forestry and wildlife. He started his WCD career as warden in 1940, but his career got sidetracked in 1941 when he volunteered to fly gliders in the Army Air Corps. He flew 25 missions over a three-and-one-half year span as a bomber pilot before returning to the WCD as a warden in December 1945.

He received his first game management job working with Frank King on reducing an overpopulation of deer on Chamber's Island the winter of 1947.

Harry became the "cooperative game manager" in Viroqua in 1948 and worked with Earl Loyster and Frank King in implementing a tree and shrub program, each covering one third of the state. After a short stint in Oshkosh, Harry became the southern regional game supervisor in 1952, then area supervisor of all programs in the Madison Area in 1971. He retired in 1978.

Harry was a big fellow, over six feet tall and weighing a solid 200 well-conditioned pounds. He was very athletic, and his fearless ski jumping at Madison's scary Blackhawk ski-jump was widely known. He often paired up with his old pal, Frank King, and conducted surprise field inspections on unsuspecting game managers. While under the pretense of looking at some marsh or special project, the real agenda was to test the manager's knowledge of his territory as well as using heart-pounding walks across some rugged field to see if the manager was in shape.

Harry's wife, Mary, was much smaller in stature than Harry but equally rugged in the out-of-doors, hiking, hunting, fishing, and downhill skiing well into her 80s. She ran her first triathlon in 1995 and placed first in her age group when competing in a Minnesota triathlon in 2004 when she was 86! Harry is an ardent hunter, with duck hunting being his passion. When Harry married Mary just before the duck season opener, it was no surprise to her that he spent their honeymoon duck hunting. Every wedding anniversary thereafter, Harry went duck hunting.

Mary had quickly learned if she was to spend time with Harry she had better hunt with him. She enjoyed that time and the experiences a great deal, but one event was almost tragic. They were grouse hunting in heavy cover one day when a bird flushed near Mary and shot shells exploded. Pellets hit Mary and she yelled, "I've been shot! Harry, I've been shot!" Hearing no response, Mary called out again "Harry! Harry! Come over here! I've been shot!" After yet another pause, Harry finally responded "Just a minute, we've got a bird down!"

In the process of building his career, Harry ran his program like he flew those in World War II missions. His calm, easy demeanor and laid back style coupled with common sense street smarts for getting work done drew regular praise and the admiration of his co-workers. He was guided by a phrase he often used: "You never build yourself up by tearing someone else down." At the end of his career, many department individuals including this author cited Harry as a program hero.

Harry and Mary celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in October 2008. Harry died on December 24, 2009.

Harold "Bud" Jordahl

Bud Jordahl was one of those very special talents that started with humble field biologist beginnings but matured as a scholarly academic who influenced wildlife management and the cause of environmental resource protection immeasurably over his lifetime.

Born in northwest Minnesota in 1926, Bud hunted ducks with his dad when the resource was very abundant, which made an indelible mark on him. The hunting, fishing, trapping, and camping he did throughout high school made those years rush by fast. After a brief stint in the navy, he was discharged in 1945. The G.I. Bill and muskrat trapping got him through his first year of college at Bowling Green State University. He transferred to the University of Michigan in 1947. Bud earned his B.S. degree in 1949 and a master's degree in forestry in 1950 with a thesis entitled



Harry Stroebe in 1956. Many game managers cited Harry as a WCD legend.



Bud Jordahl.

PHOTOS: DNR FILE

Impact of Deer Browsing on the Northern Forest. After graduating in June 1950, he was hired as a district game manager in Wisconsin by J.R. Smith. He started his career at Black River Falls under Stan DeBoer but soon replaced the departing Harry Stroebe at Viroqua. Bud became the area biologist at Spooner in 1951 when Frank King was promoted, and he also served as acting game supervisor when Burt Dahlberg was writing his deer book.

In 1954, Bud took a leave of absence to earn a second master's degree in business administration at Harvard. He also got married around that time. He became the state's Pittman-Robertson Coordinator in 1956 in Madison, replacing Wayne Truax. A career highlight occurred when he delivered 108 options costing over \$330,000 on 24 projects to the Conservation Commission at one time (an all-time record).

Bud left the WCD in 1963 to work for the Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary, as the regional coordinator for the Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region. He worked with Governor Gaylord Nelson on the first Earth Day celebration, helped create the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, and contributed to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers legislation.

Bud became professor of regional planning at the University of Wisconsin in 1965. From 1967 to 1969, he also served as the co-chair of the Upper Great Lakes Regional Commission and later served as Governor Lucy's alternate to this commission. Bud was appointed to the Natural Resources Board in 1972 and was its chair from 1974 through 1976. He was instrumental in the creation of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program in 1979 and played a key role chairing a citizen committee renewing the program in 1989.

Bud retired to a farm in Richland County but remained very active in numerous conservation related projects. He is one of the founders of the 1000 Friends of Wisconsin environmental group and the Gathering Waters land trust. He is truly one of Wisconsin's strongest conservation supporters and was inducted into the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame in 2005. Bud Jordahl died on May 11, 2010.

Armin "Doc" Schwengel

Doc Schwengel, who was a student of Aldo Leopold in 1939 and joined the WCD at the Poynette Game Farm as a junior conservation aid in 1941. After serving two years in the army, he rejoined the department in 1945 as an aid on the P-R deer project and, then, on the public hunting grounds staff. He was promoted as a game manager at Port Washington on July 1, 1946, and served as a wildlife manager/biologist in southeast Wisconsin until he retired on January 15, 1982.

A career spanning 40 years is awe inspiring in itself, but Armin's conservation work didn't end with his retirement. Not by a long shot! Having developed expertise in wetland restoration, Doc continued to work as an LTE and as a volunteer for another 20 years. His quiet mannerisms, German accent, and modest personality were very effective public relations skills and helped him coax landowners into restoring hundreds of small marshes throughout Sheboygan, Ozaukee, and Washington counties.

Doc bought a lot of land for the state during his career, and most transactions were routine and cordial. He recalled one land sale, however, that was far from routine. In about 1975, one man changed his mind about selling after signing the option form. Doc said, "He came to my house and told me he had a gun in the car and was going to get me!" His threats continued for days to the point where the warden and sheriff had to guard Armin's house at night, and the WCD administration talked about moving him to another district.

Later, the man cooled down and finally asked Doc to come over to his house so he could settle the prepayment of taxes due on the transaction. Not trusting the guy, Doc arranged to have his long-time wildlife technician, Walter Eickstad, come along to the meeting. They met in the man's kitchen and discussed the matter for about an hour. "Then," Doc said, "Walter told me it was 10:30, and we were late for a 10:00 meeting." Doc was confused by this statement but played along and they left. When they got into the car, Walter told him that he heard a pump shotgun being loaded in the



Armin "Doc" Schwengel.

COURTESY OF B. SCHWENGEL

The Gamekeepers

adjoining bathroom, and the man's son came into the room with the gun and stood behind Doc. It took 17 more years to finish commitments with this landowner.

Armin purchased thousands of acres for the state in building up Theresa Marsh, Allenton Marsh, and Jackson Marsh wildlife areas. Theresa Marsh was the biggest project, growing to over 10,000 acres by the time he was ready to retire. He received the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's highest honor, the Silver Eagle Award in 1993. Only three other awards of this kind were ever given to Wisconsin recipients (Bill Peterburs, John Keener, and James Hale).

Armin died April 10, 2007. His son William is a veteran DNR warden.

Butterfly Collector

LeRoy Lintereur was born in Two Rivers on November 22, 1920. By the age of 12, he had already mastered the identification of Wisconsin's flora and fauna. He would spend a lifetime learning how the parts related to one another. He earned his B.S. degree in zoology from the University of Wisconsin in 1952. Without question, he was the most learned naturalist ever to join the WCD's ranks.

LeRoy started for the WCD as a conservation aid in 1952. He became the district game manager in Marinette County in 1956 and remained in that position until his retirement in 1983. His distinctive French-Canadian accent caused him to pronounce the word "county" as "count-tee." Casual observation would conclude that here's someone who didn't accomplish much in his life. Nothing could be further from the truth.

LeRoy had so many skills that it's difficult to summarize even a portion of them. He was a voracious reader, often reading six to eight books a week—and he did that his entire life! He also took copious notes on everything he read and reviewed them from time to time from his extensive files. He studied the works of Thoreau, Cuvier, Darwin, Leopold, Fassett, and every naturalist of the century and applied their teachings daily.

Those who knew LeRoy admired the man and marveled at his deep knowledge of the world around him. His expertise included botany, entomology, herpetology, ornithology, mammalogy, Egyptology, and ecology. And he loved identifying spiders. He once told Keith McCaffery that his vision of Heaven was to wake up in the Miscoona Swamp where a beautiful girl would bring him a tray of spiders to identify each day.

His spoken knowledge reflected that he was also very knowledgeable in music, world religions, American history, world history, Native American history, science history, French-Canadian culture, German, French, Latin, and classical Greek. His daughter Judith Johnson told former game manager Roger Amundson, "Dad taught himself classical Greek, can translate German, and French, and has an excellent singing voice—mostly Latin hymns."

So what did this man do? First, he was deeply involved with his community. He wrote over 700 articles for the local newspaper, conducted numerous natural resources tours, and exposed thousands to wildlife and, as he put it, "his friends the trees, shrubs, and little things on the forest floor." At the same time, he was cruising deer yards, buying land, running deer pellet counts, constructing waterfowl flowages, burning brush-lands, moving nuisance beaver, surveying wildlife, and the myriad other tasks a wildlife manager does for the state.

And then there was Just vs. Marinette County. LeRoy was one of five members of a committee that drafted Marinette County Shoreland Zoning Ordinance Number 24 in 1967. Shortly thereafter, Donald and Kathryn Just of Porterfield, Wisconsin, filled in some wetlands adjoining Lake Noquebay, and they were charged with violating the Marinette County Ordinance. The family counter sued the county claiming their lands were not wetlands and that the ordinance was unconstitutional.

LeRoy was the major witness for the county and faced hours of grueling testimony focused on plant identification on the Just property. He described the nature and distribution of aquatic vegetation found on the land in great detail. The defense tried to foil LeRoy's expertise by forcing him to identify plants shown in obscure photographs,



Leroy Lintereur.

COURTESY OF THE LINTEREUR FAMILY

but LeRoy was undefeatable. He stuck to the scientific principles in assessing the biological basis for determining the classification of wetlands.

The Marinette County Circuit Court ruled in favor of Marinette County in 1970. Donald and Kathryn Just appealed their case to the Wisconsin Supreme Court. In 1972, Chief Justice E. Harold Hollow ruled that the shoreland zoning ordinance of Marinette County was constitutional. He further stated that the prohibition of the filling of wetlands was also considered constitutional and was not judged to be a public take-over of private property without compensation.

The Just vs. Marinette County case has been used nationally to further the cause of wetland protection and has been the focal point of hundreds—probably thousands—of wetland violation cases in Wisconsin and has always been held up by the courts. All of this happening because of one man...the man who delighted in calling himself “the game manager of Marinette Count-tee.”

LeRoy’s daughter Judith said that regardless of all the notoriety and awards LeRoy received, he felt the highest honor he ever received in his life was being the keynote speaker at a statewide wildlife managers meeting in the 1990s. At this meeting, he described himself as a “closet butterfly collector.” He feared it would not be considered manly if it were widely known that he had this interest. He felt that, in a way, this invitation to speak validated his 30 years with the department.

LeRoy died October 9, 1995.

Shine and Deerwester

Harold Shine and Therman Deerwester were two of the oldest game managers to serve out their careers with the department. Harold came on as a warden on October 1, 1928, but resigned to become a laborer for the new game division on June 1, 1929. He probably influenced the hiring of his cousin Therman Deerwester on April 1, 1930, to help run the state’s first game farm in Door County.

Both men put in long careers with game management. When the game farm was moved to Poynette in 1934, they both donned warden-like uniforms complete with jaunty trooper hats to lead tours at the facility. On December 1, 1945, Deerwester became the second person in history to obtain the game manager title after Ralph Conway started the title series that July. Shine became a game manager on March 1, 1946.

Shine and Deerwester actually had the two biggest territories of any game managers in history when they split the state in half, using State Highway 51 as the boundary in 1947. Shine established public hunting grounds east and Deerwester did the same to the west. Ultimately, Deerwester ended his career as the area game manager in Columbia, Iowa, and Sauk counties, and Shine became the area game manager in Brown, Door, and Kewaunee counties.

Both men received the Game Manager of the Year award and completed exemplary careers without blemish. Harold Shine retired on August 30, 1972, after 44 years of service. Therman Deerwester retired on March 31, 1973, after only 43 years with the outfit. Their lives followed the same track when Shine died on May 23, 1985—Deerwester died shortly thereafter.

Kennedy

Widely known for use of the expression “son of a buck,” Paul Kennedy often called the WCD the “son of a buckin’ outfit!” An accountant by college training, he started with the WCD at \$0.40 an hour on January 21, 1935. He advanced in rank and pay as a junior deputy conservation warden, semi-skilled laborer, junior game management supervisor, and then, finally, as an accountant at the game farm in 1943.

Paul became a game manager on January 1, 1946, and was promoted to district game manager of “District 12” (Jefferson and Dodge counties) working out of Watertown two years later. Reorganization in 1949 changed Paul’s territory to Jefferson and Walworth counties, but he retained his Watertown base. He would work out of this station until his retirement February 15, 1974—a 39-year career.



File records seem to indicate this photo is of Harold Shine (left) and Therman Deerwester (right).

DNR FILE

The Gamekeepers



Paul Kennedy in 1940. Paul started as a warden and became an accountant before he was promoted to game manager.

Kennedy excelled in land buying and purchased tens of thousands of acres over his career. He probably took more options on state land than any other state employee who ever participated in land acquisition. He almost always wore a khaki uniform and black tie that became the standard non-warden uniform in the 1950s. Because he was highly susceptible to sunburn, Paul wore a pith helmet to protect his face and neck. This odd headwear choice drew razzing from his peers for his entire career.

Paul became my first supervisor when I was assigned my first job as an assistant game manager in 1967. He called me “Davie” or “young man” and delighted to send me out on some new task with no background knowledge just to see how I’d handle the matter. Paul hated office work. Since he cleverly arranged his Watertown home as his official home station, he avoided daily trips to our real office in the Jefferson County Courthouse. I don’t believe his supervisors ever knew how he ran things.

My instructions were very clear. Except for emergencies, I was not allowed to call him at home...ever. Monday morning I was to arrive at the Jefferson office, clear any immediate telephone call returns, collect the mail, and meet Paul at the rear entrance about 9 a.m. He would be waiting in his state car, a gold-colored Chevrolet (anniversary year car). I got in on the passenger side with the stack of correspondence, and Paul would drive off heading for a tour of all wildlife areas in Jefferson County.

Paul never drove faster than 40 miles an hour to time our tour with a 4 p.m. return to the courthouse. He started the morning with a little chit-chat asking about my wife Laura, explaining some profound game management principle, or telling me one of hundreds of stories about unusual land acquisition experiences.

The focus of the day was having me read each letter in the stack of mail we had received the previous week. He would listen intently and then instruct me what to do about any inquiry that surfaced. In some cases, Paul would actually dictate the response he wanted and charged me with the responsibility to follow up with the office secretary.

It was a different era. Paul once said to me, “Young man. You don’t know anything about game management, so listen carefully and keep your big mouth shut! In about five years, you might know a little bit. Then, *maybe* you can speak out at the game manager’s meeting.” Interestingly, every game manager Paul supervised ended up in the central office including Ed Frank, Ron Nicotera, Carl Evert, and me.

Paul died in 1992.

The Fritz-Neustadter Connection

Louis Fritz was a career conservation aid who worked for the WCD from the 1940s to the 1960s. He spent a good share of his career living and working on the Mazomanie Public Hunting Grounds. Les Neustadter was in that group of first game managers in 1947 and worked his way up through the ranks to area supervisor in Green Bay, retiring in 1986. Les left a permanent mark on the Wisconsin landscape when he worked on the WCD’s first major wildlife habitat project, P-R project 19-D.

When I became the Madison area game manager in 1972, one of 24 state wildlife properties under my supervision was Mazomanie. The department had just ended the long-term policy of providing house rentals for state employees, and I was directed to remove an old barn that remained after the house Louis Fritz had lived in was burned and buried.

As I inventoried the old barn to make sure nothing of value remained before I advertised for disposal bids, I stumbled on an enclosed room barely visible in a corner of the barn’s unusual third story. There was a rusty, WCD padlock on the door and it took me awhile to pry it open. When the door finally gave way, I distinctly heard a soft whoosh of air rush into the room.

I was stunned to discover a huge supply of equipment in the old room. Most of it was still in unopened packaging or boxes. Snowshoes, shovels, cases of shiny axe blades, rakes, bundles of axe handles, old-style fire control backpacks, stacks of live traps, and row upon row of spuds (a pick-like device used for tree planting) hanging from the ceiling. Wow! Each bore a mark identifying its source from 40 years ago...CCC!

I reported my find to supervisor Harry Stroebe, known for his huge inventory of salvaged equipment used by everyone needing something special for a work project. Harry was tickled to add to his larder but was as mystified as I was about the original source of the equipment. I told the story for years and enjoyed the reaction by countless listeners speculating about the old equipment's origin.

Thirty years later, I repeated the story yet again to Les Neustadter when interviewing him for historical recollections. He laughed out loud and said, "So that's what Louis did with that stuff!" When asked to explain, he told me the story I had been searching for all these years. He said, "Louis Fritz and I each received a dump truck load of old CCC equipment and were told by our supervisor to get rid of it. I got rid of mine where it never would be found. Louie probably didn't have the heart to destroy useful equipment and hid it in the old barn." Mystery solved!

The Big Kahuna

A lot of wildlife managers and biologists were very bright individuals, but few brought the intensity of intellectual thought and dedication to problem solving for wildlife than the very large guy we affectionately called "The Big Kahuna," former end and tackle for the University of Marquette's football team and recruited by the Green Bay Packers. The man's name is Edward Frank.

Ed joined the old WCD in 1958 as a conservation aid and was probably the only aid with a master's degree at the time. After working with John Gates on his pheasant research project for two years, he became a game manager at Elkhorn (Walworth County) under area game manager Paul Kennedy. Two years later, he was promoted to wildlife research as the pheasant project leader at Waterloo Wildlife Area, the first warm season grass study of its kind in Wisconsin.

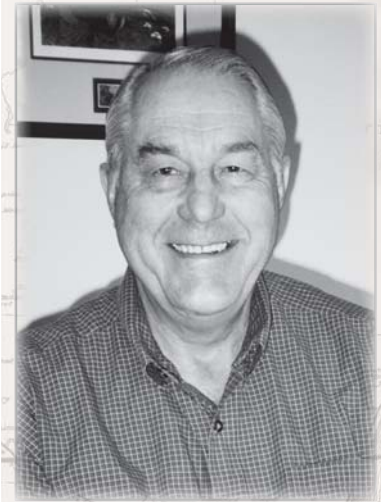
When Ed advanced to the Wildlife Bureau staff in 1969, he assumed a leadership role as the farm game specialist for the program. After short stints on the PL 566 watershed project at the University of Wisconsin, he served as a planning specialist in the new Bureau of Planning in 1977 but continued his wildlife staff duties. His staff role in the Bureau of Wildlife Management became full time again 1983 under the new title of "upland wildlife ecologist." In his spare time, he took classes at the University of Wisconsin for a Ph.D.

On the bureau staff, any proposal or problem that needed headwork ended up on Ed's desk. Developing the state's first hen shooting and 2 p.m. closure emanated from Ed. Examining alternatives for pheasant rearing and cost analysis fell on Ed. His personal prodding of the staff was probably responsible for the agency's renewed interest in establishing wild turkeys in the state. The Natural Resources Board wildlife policy he developed for inclusion in the Wisconsin Administrative Code (Appendix M) was a first in the nation and is still effective today.

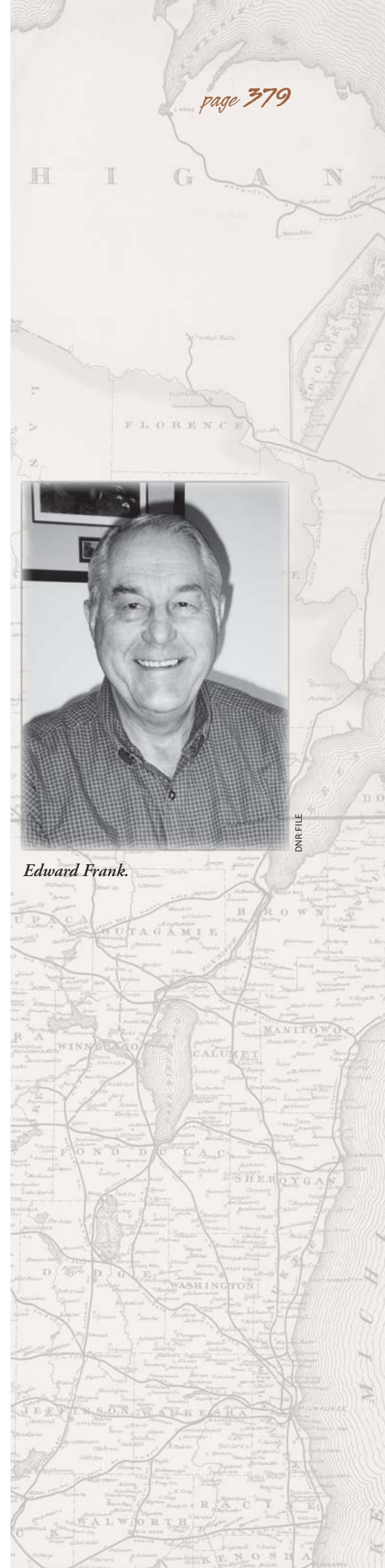
Ed is a very congenial man and had a reputation for always remaining calm and professional even when those around him were screaming and yelling at him. His strength was also his shortcoming because he was an analytical thinker to a fault. "Never ask Ed about the time of day because he'll tell you how the watch was made" was the standard way his peers described his thoroughness.

The Big Kahuna retired in 1991 but remained very active with the National Wild Turkey Federation and the Wisconsin Chapter of The Wildlife Society and as president of the Sharp-tailed Grouse Society. Outdoor writer Tim Eisele wrote about Ed's retirement in the January 7, 1991, issue of the *Capital Times*, noting his long commitment to natural resources. The ending quote in the article typified Ed's deep thinking when he said, "The saga of man as a member of the living community is not at an end. It is evolving, and the impacts of increasing numbers of people and the way we live are even more critical than they once were."

Ed and his wife of 50 plus years, Deane, live in Madison, winter in Florida, and enjoy lake life at their cottage on Deer Lake, north of Spooner.



Edward Frank.



The Gamekeepers

The Shadow

Frank Haberland got the title of “The Shadow” after Lamont Cranston’s 1940s radio character because of Frank’s mysterious disappearance from his office at periodic intervals while serving on the bureau staff in the 1980s. Co-workers never knew where Frank went, just that sometimes he was there...sometimes he wasn’t.

Haberland had a long career with the department starting out as a forest ranger and fire fighter in 1960. He passed an exam and joined the ranks as a game manager in 1962 along with Ronald Nicotera, Roger Amundson, Jim Huntoon, and Tom Hansen. He then spent seven years in the North Woods around Spooner before he competed for a central office job. Frank became the big game management supervisor on the bureau staff in 1969.

Frank was kind of a loner. While he was very social when approached, Frank thought of himself as a rebel and preferred to just do his own thing. But the man knew a lot about deer and was the perfect person for the job during the time he served between 1969 and his retirement 20 years later. Perfect for the job because it was a solo position. No staff help, no LTEs, no program assistant...just Frank and 500,000 experts!

All of the bureau staff was busy, but none could compare to Frank’s world of constant ringing telephones, stacks of daily letters, countless meetings, and Conservation Congress commitments. Fortunately, he did have deer researchers Bill Creed and Keith McCaffery to rely on for solid science, but Frank still had to face the Conservation Congress, its chair, Bill Murphy, Wisconsin Bowhunters Association, Whitetails Unlimited, angry rednecks, and inquiring bureaucrats solo most of the time.

People liked Frank and that probably helped his longevity on the bureau staff. He kept careful records with beautiful penmanship, and his presentations to various organizations including the Conservation Congress never stumbled on facts. When Frank reluctantly started season predictions in the 1970s, he never missed projecting the total kill by more than a small percentage his entire career.

The Shadow’s personal exploits were fraught with humor. For a while, Conservation Congress delegates thought Frank was the friendliest guy because he always wore a button displaying that famous yellow, round face that displayed the expression “Have a Nice Day.” A closer look revealed an expletive under the expression.

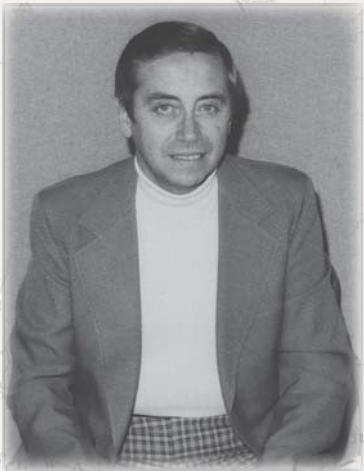
A classic Haberland story took place in the late 1980s at a resort near Rhineland. During a break in the agenda, I spotted Frank by himself out on a small deck overlooking the yard and lake beyond. Frank appeared deep in thought as he was staring at a bird feeder below and didn’t say a word when I sidled up. After a moment or two of silence, Frank said, “You know, I’ve never killed a hummingbird.” Seeing my baffled look, he added, “I never could get a bead on the little (expletive)!”

Bill Ishmael replaced Haberland in 1990 and remained until 1992. Bill Mytton replaced him but left the DNR in 2002. After a nearly three-year vacancy, Keith Warnke served in the role from 2004 until he joined the Bureau of Law Enforcement in 2010. Currently, the job belongs to Kevin Wallenfang, and who knows how long he’ll stay in the job. It’s very likely no one person will ever carry on in this tough job as long as the Shadow.

Charles Pils

There can’t be many people who know that St. Louis Cardinal’s immortal Stan “The Man” Musial had the exact number of lifetime hits at home as he did away (1,815), but Chuck Pils knows. He is one of the few wildlife biologists in Wisconsin who is a *real* St. Louis Cardinal fan, noting that Glen Evelyn and Sumner Matteson also claim to be fans. Chuck is also a pianist, an excellent third baseman, a Cuba supporter, a wildlife expert, and a fair-to-middling hunter and fisherman.

Chuck grew up in Chicago and shows that influence in his speech patterns. He received his B.S. degree in zoology from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana and his master’s degree in zoology at Southern Illinois University at



Frank Haberland.



Chuck Pils.

Carbondale in 1965. He started out with the old WCD as an LTE warden but jumped at the chance for a permanent job in the Bureau of Engineering in 1966 working for Lew Posekany.

Biologist John Gates hired him as a farm game biologist for wildlife research in 1967 working on pheasant research through 1971 and red fox and cottontail rabbits through 1975. He worked on a four-year deer food habits and car-deer collision project through 1979 when he was promoted to a furbearer specialist position in the Bureau of Wildlife Management.

While on the bureau staff, Chuck enjoyed the collateral duties of personnel hiring, coordinating various activities with field personnel, and creating the only personnel index of wildlife technicians and their expertise actively promoting their role in the agency in 1984.

As furbearer specialist, Chuck was involved in the reintroduction of the American marten and was the architect of new fisher trapping regulations in 1985. Chuck was promoted to Landscape Ecology Section chief in 1989. He coordinated the development of the state's first trapper education program with the Wisconsin Trappers Association and facilitated getting mandatory trapper education into law in 1991. In 1992, he became director of the Bureau of Endangered Resources.

As Endangered Resources director, Chuck took great personal pride in developing the license plate funding idea that eventually was established by legislation to provide a stable revenue source for the program. Under his watch, endangered resource management became more integrated in the bureaus of forestry and wildlife management. Peregrine falcon reintroductions and a huge coordination effort with 22 organizations for the Karner Blue Butterfly Habitat Conservation Plan were major accomplishments. The Nature Conservancy emerged as a major partner for endangered resources efforts.

One story about Chuck involved a budget meeting being coordinated by Tim Andryk that focused on Mike Gappa at Black River Falls. Budgets were short, and they were putting the pressure on Gappa to cut low priority projects. Gappa, whose job dedication and deep devotion to wildlife was very personal, spoke dramatically for several minutes about the budget cuts, claiming, "Prioritizing work tasks is like asking me to prioritize my children!" Chuck was on to Mike's ploy and told him in mock sternness to "shape up and get on with it!" With that admonishment, Gappa said, "Oh, OK!" while casually pulling out a slip of paper with the priorities that he had all the while.

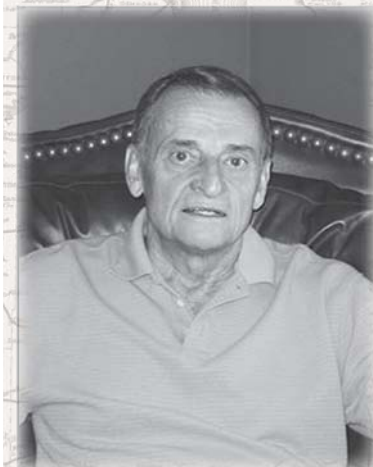
Chuck married Linda in 1968, a very bright teacher who managed her job and the Pils' household in Madison for these many years. After Chuck retired from the DNR in 1999, they traveled extensively to Africa, Costa Rica, Cuba, and Europe as well as remaining very active in the community.

Joseph Haug

The expression "You woodchuck!" was Joe Haug's favorite. When he became agitated, he would often speak short phrases in German to accentuate his point, usually in a derogative manner. Tipping his head back a bit, he'd say, "You Hunyak! You don't know what the hell you're talking about!" as he tried to intimidate whomever he was addressing with a stern look on his face and eyebrows arched while leaning into the person. Such was the typical behavior of one of the most popular man in the wildlife manager ranks. His story is worth telling.

Joe graduated from St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin in 1965 and went on to earn his master's degree from Texas A&M in 1969. His master's thesis was on black-tailed jackrabbits. He was hired by the WCD in May 1970 as a research assistant on wetland habitat at Horicon and then became a project assistant on the Rock River Project in 1971. He was forever grateful to John Keener when he became one of nine game managers hired in 1972 out of 77 finalists.

Starting out in Green Bay and just two years into the profession, Joe was already well known. His forceful speaking style, slick, jet-black hair, piercing dark eyes, and habit of calling everyone "Woodchuck" or "Hunyak" had everyone shaking in their boots or laughing hysterically.



Joe Haug.

COURTESY OF J. HAUG

"When I learned that my first 'real' wildlife job was going to be with the Wisconsin DNR, I was thrilled and petrified at once. As the first female on staff, everyone put me through the paces. After the "gauntlet" and a year on the job, I felt like and was treated as a professional.

—Diana Hallett



Diana Hallett.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF D. HALLETT

Young and full of vinegar, Joe's only disappointment at that time was when he sought out sympathy from district director Stan DeBoer. He and Dan Olson had a rough meeting with a drunked-up snowmobile club the previous night. He had the miserable task of telling them their trail was being closed on state land, and their reactions were "a bit abusive." Stan merely said, "My boy, you earned your money yesterday" (so, get back to work).

Joe became the Sandhill-Meadow Valley project manager at Babcock in 1974 and could not believe he was being paid to do this sort of fun work. He carried warden credentials and worked at law enforcement with the same dedication he gave game management. He saw the ecological value of all species of wildlife but expressed disdain for artificial stocking of game species. When interviewed later about his Babcock assignment, he said, "86,000 acres of habitat! Talk about making a biologist happy! Land to manage, impoundments to manipulate, nature trails, Sandhill research, trophy bucks, and, finally, an outdoors skills program!"

One of the statewide meetings taught Joe a lesson he'll never forget. He was thrilled to be jawing with the legendary Harry Stroebe, who was enjoying his favorite Walters beer. Trying to absorb multiple martinis while talking to Stroebe was a big mistake. Joe thinks he left the bar okay, but he had no memory of getting to his motel room. The next day, his roommate Harry Libby told him that he was worried about him when he didn't show up. Turns out, Joe had entered the wrong room and slept with two mentors, Bruce Gruthoff and Dan Olson.

Joe became the area game manager at Wisconsin Rapids in 1981. By now, his wildlife knowledge and reputation for being outspoken on certain principles were widely known. His dynamic style was something that you had to see in action to really appreciate his impact on those around him. When he arrived at a large meeting of his peers, a few friends would immediately approach him with greetings. In a short time, a few more would notice him and join the group. It wouldn't be long before he was completely surrounded by friends anxious to hear what he had to say.

Joe received the Wildlife Manager of the Year Award in 1984. He retired in 2000 and lives with his wife, Sharon, in Green Valley, Arizona.

First Female Wildlifer

The hiring of the first female game manager was not only noteworthy because of its precedence but because it was instrumental in infusing perspective and talent into the profession as more women were hired, which was essential for program growth... maybe even its survival. The person hired in May of 1977 was Diana Hallett.

Hallett was born in Madison, Wisconsin, but grew up in St. Louis, Missouri. Her father exposed her to nature and rabbit hunting that included frequent summer trips back to Wisconsin for fishing and camping. Those ventures influenced her to pursue a career in conservation. She earned her B.A. degree in zoology with a minor in chemistry and went on to obtain her master's degree in wildlife biology from the University of Missouri at Columbia. Hallett's thesis work revolved around coyotes, and she was mentored by Thomas Baskett, leader of the Fish and Wildlife Service's Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit.

A personal connection with Carl Batha in Wisconsin—a district wildlife supervisor at the time—led to a job interview and hiring by the Bureau of Wildlife Management. Hallett called the six-month training tour that followed "a gauntlet." Her assignment at the Sandhill Wildlife Area during the first experimental muzzleloader hunt had her dragging out deer from area thickets and swamps. A record snowfall stranded her at Eagle, forcing her to take a snowcat to the local game manager's house where children's bunks served the unusual guest.

Her all-male wildlife manager supervisors were cordial but clearly skeptical about her abilities. Undoubtedly, like most females, Hallett knew she had to perform better than average and display no reluctance in performing any task, especially physically challenging activities. Pre-dawn wake-ups for prairie chicken surveys, slogging through wetlands, handling firearms, and facing angry rednecks at beer-enhanced meetings

came in bunches. Pellets from a shotgun missed her while releasing pheasants but made an indelible mark on her mind.

Carl Batha designed a real-world training opportunity on the Wisconsin River that Hallett couldn't pass up. Always alert for exposing trainees to unique experiences, Batha arranged to borrow the district airboat and took wildlife manager Tom Meier and Hallett out for a tour of the river. The airboat was actually a johnboat with a jury-rigged frame holding an aircraft engine and prop. They shared the driving experience until shallow water forced Batha and Hallett to climb out. As Meier attempted to turn the boat in front of where they stood on a sandbar, it flipped over! Meier emerged unscathed as Batha and Hallett waded out to rescue him and the swamped boat. A radio call to the local warden arranged a tow.

Upon completion of her introductory district training tours, Hallett was stationed in southeastern Wisconsin. There she worked on the master plan for the Southern Unit of the Kettle Moraine Forest, helped craft furbearer management guidelines, worked with the City of Waukesha on Vernon Marsh Wildlife Area management issues, and got exposed to the usual mixture of wildlife management activities. After just over a year with the DNR, Hallett returned to Missouri because she and her fiancé had set a marriage date. She wasn't giving up a conservation career, because she worked for the FWS before landing a research biologist position with the Missouri Department of Conservation (another first-female hire).

Batha retained communications with Hallett, and he kept her Wisconsin counterparts apprised of her career. She rose rapidly in the ranks in Missouri, advancing to Wildlife Research chief and eventually Resource Science chief administrator over the next 30 years. Another career highlight demonstrated her passion for the wildlife profession when she became the first female to serve as the head of The Wildlife Society (2001–02). Hallett retired from the Missouri Department of Conservation in 2003.

Tom Becker

Tom Becker was probably the most practical and plainspoken manager ever to suit up for the outfit. Starting his career as a conservation aid at Waterford in 1964, he piled up enough experience and knowledge to become a game technician in Burlington in 1975. He had just finished his college credits at UW-Stevens Point when he was promoted to a game manager position in Burlington in 1976.

Like most managers at the time, Tom received warden credentials with little training except a few encouraging words. Bob Winnie—former warden and then Southeast Region director—told him, “Don't make a fool of yourself and never give anyone a break because it'll come back to haunt you!”

When working for old time game manager Allen McVey back in the 1960s, Tom recalled getting the assignment to move some buildings off a site. One of the structures was an old outhouse that McVey thought was worth saving. After digging a new hole down slope from the old one, Tom slipped the tractor bucket under the outhouse, chained it in place, and commenced moving it down hill.

The heavy weight in front had the tractor off balance, and Tom felt the momentum picking up as they jostled over rocks, fallen limbs and the bumpy terrain. Dangerously out of control, Tom's experience came to play as he moved the bucket lever intending to ease the bucket to the ground. Unfortunately, just at that moment the tractor hit a bump. The next thing Tom knew, he left the tractor seat and crashed through the outhouse. He stood up in disbelief with his hand still on the outhouse door handle!

Tom always seemed have a smile on his face, and his years of training rookie game managers earned him the nickname of “Godfather.” He was very resourceful and prided himself on being able to tackle any chore. Chuck Pils told a story to illustrate that point by recalling an event occurring at a Midwest Wildlife Conference near Milwaukee. Weary of hearing papers, Chuck retreated to the hospitality room sponsored by the DNR. He was surprised by a booming voice that said, “What'll ya have?” There stood Tom Becker in a shirt and tie with a neat little white apron around his stout body and holding a tray of drinks. He could handle any chore!



Tom Becker at a turkey release in the Kettle Moraine.

The Gamekeepers

Tom Hansen

Tom Hansen worked for the department for 33 years without limelight or frequent press events. His quiet demeanor and modest-to-a-fault personality prevented the public and DNR employees who didn't work with him from knowing just how valuable he was for Wisconsin wildlife management. Experts who know these credentials say he was one of the best land managers in the agency.

Tom started like a lot of early-era managers as a conservation aid working at several locations in the old West Central Area. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1958 but continued as an aid at Horicon until 1960. After working as a game manager in Minnesota for two years buying land and working with Dr. Harold Hansen (famous for identifying the "giant" Canada geese at Rochester, Minnesota), Tom was hired by the WCD as the game manager at Medford in northwestern Wisconsin.

Under the tutelage of Burt Dahlberg and Clifford Wiita, Tom learned all about large waterfowl flowage construction and habitat development at the grass-roots level from 1963 to 1969. He was promoted as the area game manager at Wautoma in 1975. Moving to Berlin in 1978, he served out his career and left a permanent mark on the landscape.

Kent Klepinger, Rod Bahr, and wildlife technician Wayne Besaw had purchased most of a huge wetland complex called Grand River Marsh Wildlife Area before Tom arrived on the scene. Working with Bill "You option it and I'll appraise it" Fields, Tom completed purchasing the remaining land needed for flowage construction including a very rare condemnation proceeding.

Tom later recalled being involved with a purchase of an abandoned farm with the help of Wayne Besaw. Since it was a family homestead, the elderly woman who owned the property said she would never sell as long as the buildings remained standing. As luck would have it, shortly thereafter, the buildings burned to the ground. Though Tom and Wayne steadfastly denied having anything to do with the fire, word quickly spread within the department that if any game acquisition problems arose, they could call on these two "barnburners."

With the completion of the last land purchase, Tom supervised the construction of a large dam that flooded the marsh and created a huge, 3,000-acre flowage on a 7,000-acre refuge and public hunting grounds. At its peak, the refuge attracted more geese than any other state-owned project in the 1970s (including Horicon) with over 100,000 Canada geese arriving in the fall. Breeding and migrating ducks are also significant by-products of this wildlife area. In 1978, he was awarded the Wildlife Manager of the Year honor for his extraordinary accomplishments.

Marsh management doesn't end with putting water on it. Periodic drawdowns are necessary to settle out the accumulated silt, revitalize the vegetation, and attempt to kill all the carp. Because large areas like Grand River Marsh can't be drawn down completely, chemical treatment was necessary to kill the carp, so public controversy was standard fare.

Tom repeated the chemical treatment procedure several times over the years by organizing huge crews of DNR employees, prison residents, and youth camp participants to help clean up tons of the resultant dead carp. Tom took delight in asking trainee game managers to check the moist-plant growth and observing the inevitable dense coverage of "stick-tights" on their clothes.

Tom also coordinated the Mekan River – Devil's Lake Youth Conservation Camps for 13 years. These camps introduced high school kids to fieldwork on public properties in central and southern Wisconsin. Coordination involved identifying work projects and scheduling the work with camp, area, district, and central office staffs. Tom credited a host of "good bosses" for the program's success, including Wayne Truax, Jim Raber, Carl Batha, Glen Eveland, Jim March, and Jim Huntoon. He also really appreciated the wildlife technicians, including Ken Rued, Wayne Besaw, Kenny Monroe, Jerry Staehle, Mike Penning, Jerry Reetz, and Jim Radke.



Tom Hansen.

DNR FILE

Tom Hansen retired in 1993 but continued to work with wetlands. He belongs to a private organization entitled Wetlanders, organized by retired DNR supervisor Wayne Truax, whose members work on wetland improvement projects. He and his wife of 40 years, Linda, live in Berlin, Wisconsin.

Attorney Game Guy

The hiring of a young, recently graduated attorney for a number-crunching bureau staff position was probably the most unlikely hiring in agency history. The man hired was so full of energy, so positive in outlook, and so happy all the time that high suspicion of drug use followed him the first months on the job. His name is Tim Andryk.

Tim received his B.S. degree in wildlife management from UW-Stevens Point in 1980 and his master's degree in wildlife management from Montana University in 1983. He left Montana to work as a wildlife biologist for the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) from 1984 to 1986 and spent three years working on his law degree from the University of Wisconsin Law School at Madison.

Attracted to the wildlife bureau as an LTE natural resources assistant from September 1986 to September 1987, he became the acting migratory bird specialist from September 1987 to June 1988, finishing his law degree in May. After a six-month stint working as a planner for the division administrator Jim Addis, he became the comprehensive planning specialist for the Wildlife Bureau from January 1989 to January 1993.

Tim was promoted to fish and wildlife attorney in 1993 and has been in that position since that time. He served as a special assistant to the secretary on conservation matters from January 2001 to January 2003.

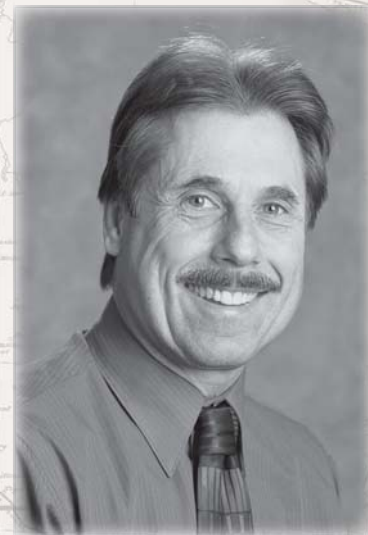
Tim is a ball of energy. Starting most days with 200 sit-ups and 400 pull-ups, he covered the ground at the office quicker than anyone in the ranks. His high energy level and happy spirit made him a delight to work with, and everyone enjoyed his company. One of his good friends was wildlife technician Brian Buenzow, a man with equal stamina, pleasant disposition, and good work habits. Their joint resolution was to be the best husbands their wives could ever imagine in the off-season to make up for being bad husbands when hunting and fishing season arrived.

It wasn't long before their reputation for play matched their work ethic. In the fall, they thought nothing of partying and telling stories until everyone left and then driving through the night to Lake Michigan to hunt ducks all day. Tim said, "Brian and I decided early on that sleep was an expendable activity when there was important hunting or fishing to do!" Their pace cannot be described adequately, but Tim said they both truly believe that "the man who dies with the most stories to tell is the most successful."

One story about Tim probably assured him a place in this book. When he was working for the GLIFWC as a tribal biologist and living in Ashland, Tim was dating the daughter of a baker. Tim loved doughnuts! He was also an avid bow hunter, and his bakery connection allowed him to get large quantities of day-old doughnuts to use as bait for bear. After dumping a pile of these stale gut-busters at his hunting spot one morning, Tim climbed a nearby tree to wait for a bear.

After an hour of staring down at those doughnuts, Tim couldn't resist getting out of the tree and retrieving one from the bait pile to go with his coffee. Back in the tree, he continued to stare at the bait for another hour before repeating his coffee break. By noon, he went home for lunch and returned by 2 p.m. to discover a bear had "hit" his bait pile. Obviously, the bear had watched Tim's antics all morning and outsmarted him!

Tim's career highlights are probably yet to come, but he had two proud moments already recorded. One was coordinating the interviews for hiring 11 wildlife managers at one time in 1989 (two more were hired the following year). The other was defending the state's mourning dove season in front of the Wisconsin Supreme Court and winning a 7-0 decision. The DNR is lucky to have Tim's talent. Today, Tim serves as the Director of the Bureau of Legal Services.



Tim Andryk.

The Gamekeepers

Balance Guy

Every once in awhile, the DNR hires someone who appears to be very qualified for the job but after a few months, clearly is very much beyond being just a good employee. It turns out their knowledge is superior, they are extremely articulate, have a keen sense of humor, seem to excel at everything they do, and have a clear vision of "The Big Picture." Such is the case in the hiring of Alan Crossley.

Al earned his B.S. degree cum laude in wildlife conservation and management from Southwest Missouri State University in 1978. He then received his master's degree in wildlife management from the University of Maine, successfully defending his thesis on *Summer Pond Use by Moose in Northern Maine* in 1985.

Al first worked for the Wisconsin DNR as a natural resources specialist (LTE) for the Bureau of Wildlife Management from July 1984 to April 1986. Hired as a private land manager (project position) at Horicon in April 1986, he quickly advanced to the regional wildlife biologist at DNR's South Central Region in April 1988. As a result of the 1996 reorganization, Al's title became regional wildlife expert. Following another reorganization in 2002, he served as the wildlife program leader directing CWD activities first from the South Central Region until 2004 and then in the central office until 2009. Alan now serves as the Public Lands Specialist in the bureau.

Alan "walked the talk" when it came to balancing his professional life with his personal life. Even after Glen Eveland lectured him about long work hours on his first day as a private lands biologist in 1986, Al remembered thinking to himself, "I'll give 110% on this job, but putting in lots of hours isn't the only way to do that." Working for the DNR would always be a distant second behind his wife Karen and their three children, Sam, Hannah, and Caleb.

After a 1999 speech at the statewide wildlife managers' meeting entitled "In Search of Balance: the Pursuit of the Holy Grail" that addressed career-home life challenges, Alan earned the nickname "Balance Guy." Later, he received an inspiring thank-you note from a retiring John Cole, who thanked him for the good advice and stated, "I finally reordered my priorities to put my family on the top, and I'm a much happier guy."

Alan is also known as the "Dancin' Fool." Any meeting involving an overnight stay invariably led Al to kick up his heels on the dance floor. As an LTE in 1985, old timers recall Al making an indelible mark with his dancing skills at a statewide meeting in Cable. Dolly Zosel had brought her boom-box, and Al commenced dancing with Randy Jurewicz, Sumner Matteson, and Chuck Pils. John Keener leaning against the wall and watching grown men dancing was, no doubt, horrified.

Al is still dancing.

Tom Bahti

Tom earned his B.S. degree in forestry from Michigan Technological University in 1971 and his master's degree in wildlife biology from Colorado State University in 1973. He started off his DNR career in the Water Quality Program at Green Bay in 1973 through January 1979 but jumped at the chance to become the wildlife manager at Shawano in February 1979.

The game ranks were his true calling. Tom soon excelled at property management, public relations, nuisance wildlife control, land acquisition, and you name it. His articulate speech delivery, quick wit, and great sense of humor made him very popular with local sportsmen clubs as well as with his peer group. He was promoted to Green Bay Area game manager in 1984 and served in that capacity until 1996.

Tom cited that his career highlights revolve around deer. Being a long-time member of DNR's Farmland Deer Committee, he helped develop and implement the first Earn-a-Buck season in 1996. That season framework provided the extra antlerless deer harvest pressure critical for deer management units experiencing deer populations chronically over the winter goal. Leading the Northeast Wildlife Team and being awarded the "Team of the Year" award for CWD sampling and surveillance was a career highlight.

Tom's favorite story happened when he and Jim Raber attended a deer meeting in Gillett back in the late 1970s. When they sat down for the meeting, an old trapper



Alan Crossley.



Tom Bahti.

named Louie Muhla sat down next to them. He insisted on sitting on their left side. Tom recalled that Louie was blind in his left eye just before Louie said, “I need to sit here so I can keep my eye on you two.”

After reorganization in 1996, Tom became the regional wildlife biologist (“wildlife expert” by title) for the Northeast Region that July, advancing to regional wildlife supervisor in 2003; he retired in 2006.

District Staff Specialists

A leadership award developed by the Wildlife Bureau after 1992 rewarded a few district wildlife staff specialists, but all of them deserved special recognition for leadership above and beyond anything that could have been judged as normal duties. Most served long tenures in these positions and all of them gave unpaid time commitments every week of their careers.

Carl Batha, Southern District; Tom Smith, Southeast District; Terry Valen, West Central District; Arlyn Loomans, North Central District; Robert Dreis, Northwest District; and Jim Raber, Lake Michigan District were the longest serving in the early days of the position, so they get a little extra credit for doing a great job. Bruce Moss replaced Dreis in 1983 and served through 1995.

District staffers were outspoken leaders and were always looking out for the troops. At one time, Batha, Raber, Valen, Moss, and Loomans were known as the “Dissident Five” because of their coalition against some bureau policy they thought was unjustified. However, that period of disagreement was brief. The majority of the time, they were very supportive of central office policies and procedures provided they were thoroughly reviewed and supported before implementation.

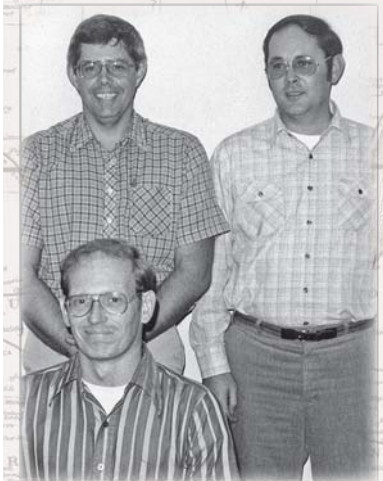
The staff specialist position was strategic to identifying, scheduling, and supervising wildlife management in the field. Without it, cumbersome bureaucratic channels through the secretary, division, district, and area would add immeasurably to the time required to complete even the simplest task. Further, the position created cohesiveness in the profession statewide because of the daily wildlifer-to-wildlifer communications.

District specialists were unique, and each brought their own special skills to the worktable. Dreis had a long tenure of work experience and was assertive in expressing his views. Valen and Moss were the most outspoken and were often joined at the hip on various issues. They usually were the first ones to yell “horse manure” when the bureau staff was off target. Raber, Loomans, and Batha were independent thinkers and not afraid to speak out. Tom Smith was quiet spoken but very bright, and his people-oriented metropolitan district (Milwaukee vicinity) kept him focused on the people and problems with nuisance wildlife.

The personal habits of these men also provided entertainment. Batha took some flak for his habit of getting impatient at meetings and walking around the room examining pictures or looking out the window. Smith was always engrossed with the huge stack of messages waiting back at his office. Raber had an English cocker that was talked about because of its small size and the fact that the dog’s breed was not up to the standards of his Brittany-dominated peers. Loomans was the best looking and the best golfer in the outfit. And Valen was a Leopold fan—deeply thoughtful and never rushing into any new venture.

However, Bruce Moss produced the best stories—the biggest fish yarns, the best duck hunting experience, the most trophy-buck misses, and the best “you won’t believe” stories. One tale was good enough to make the newspapers, Conservation Congress hate letters, and the hoo-haw of his friends. It involved Bruce repeating information from a trusted wildlife manager at an inopportune time.

On a Monday morning after the deer season opener around the year 2001, Bruce came in the office and discovered Jay Reed, outdoor writer for the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*, waiting for him. Picking up the ringing phone, Bruce talked with a senior wildlife manager (name withheld) about opening season impressions. The manager said, “Well, we certainly hit the *post rut depression* (new term) in buck activity right on the head this year.” This nameless manager had been promoting an earlier deer season for decades and was disappointed with this season opener.



District wildlife staff specialists.

Top photo: Carl Batha and Arlyn Loomans (back row left to right). Terry Valen (lower right).

Bottom photo: Jim Raber and Bruce Moss (back row left to right). Tom Smith (lower left).

The Gamekeepers

After getting off the phone, Reed asked for Bruce's season impression and Bruce replied, "Well, we sure caught the bucks during post rut depression once again." While no one had a clue what this meant, Jay Reed put the quote in the newspapers. Later, Bruce received T-shirts from Wildlife Bureau director Steve Miller and Conservation Congress chair Bill Murphy with the phrase immortalized. Wildlife managers were still kidding Bruce about the quote after he retired in 2005.

Research Icons

Where would wildlife management be today if science didn't guide it and seek out new directions? That's a very easy question to answer. The Wisconsin program would be quite primitive and certainly way behind the advances of other states.

Despite their intellect, the early research pioneers in the 1930s probably didn't have much of an idea about the magnitude of future research contributions. They clearly knew it was essential, however, if game management was ever going to amount to anything significant. The early leader, Irvan Buss, gets credit for channeling Pittman-Robertson funds in the right places and building a core of information on key wildlife species.

Cy Kabat's arrival in 1948 as research chief was not very exciting because of his rather stiff personality and dry rhetoric. However, the behind-the-scenes accomplishments of his career were strategic to the success of the entire research team. He hired Ruth Hine because he recognized her valuable talent even though the proper vacancy wasn't available. He facilitated the creation of the Technical Sections of the four flyway councils. He helped organize Wisconsin's first endangered species program and had the original thought of committing a full-time person to the program.

Jim Hale was another wildlife research staple from 1947 to 1983. Because of his impeccable credentials, people will probably forget he was John Keener's supervisor when Keener was the project leader for the "Great Capercaillie Caper" (described in Chapter 3). He made his early mark as the chief editor of all research publications, and he was wildlife research section chief for over 20 years before becoming bureau director. His last career move was a lateral transfer to lead the state's endangered resources program.

Hale set up the first Office of Endangered Resources in 1978 and was its director until his retirement in 1983. Upon his retirement, he received the Silver Eagle Award from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Enjoying frequent Elderhostel adventures, Hale wrote informative wildlife articles into the new millennium and contributed his editing skills to this book.

Richard "Dick" Hunt was another key link on the research side that extended from his career start in 1952 through retirement 34 years later. He brought more than biological knowledge to the table because he was the cheerleader for the profession. He never passed up a speaking opportunity to tout the accomplishments of wildlife biologists, both in research and in management. On the national level, he quickly established his professional credentials as one of the most knowledgeable waterfowl biologists in the country and served for years on the Mississippi Flyway Council's Technical Section.

Later Research Bureau directors including Kent Klepinger and Bob Dumke came along at a time when program administration, meetings, reorganization, environmental protection emphasis, and just plain bureaucracy detracted from their main function and no doubt impeded wildlife research progress. Nonetheless, both made strides in improving operational strategies and accommodating increasing work needs with reduced staff.

But what about the rank and file? Fortunately, there were many who produced useful information about wildlife that improved its management in Wisconsin. Wildlife leaders included Arlyn Linde, Harold Matthiak, John Gates, Buzz Besadny, Fred Wagner, Bob Dorney, Larry Jahn, Donald R. Thompson, Al Rusch, Gene Woehler, Jim March, LeRoy Petersen, Chuck Pils, Ron Gatti, Bruce Kohn, Jim Ashbrenner, Bill Wheeler, Larry Gregg, and Jerry Bartelt. Some were legendary.



Jim Hale.



Robert Dumke.

PHOTOS: DNR FILE

The Hamerstroms

How fortunate the state was to attract the talents of Frederick (Hammy) and Francis (Fran) Hamerstrom. In 1940, Fran became the only female to earn a graduate degree under Aldo Leopold's supervision. Fred became the only person to earn a doctorate under Leopold the following year.

While the couple's nearly 25 years of prairie chicken research drew international acclaim for Wisconsin, their impeccable scientific credentials, unique character, and outspoken mannerisms influenced the cause of conservation beyond measure. Both started their WCD careers as conservation aids in 1949, but quickly became biologists for wildlife research.

Fred was brilliant as a scientist, quiet spoken, and a gentleman at all times. Late in his career, his pure white hair and matching beard with contrasting jet-black eyebrows were most distinguished. A neighbor once confided that speaking to Fred was "like speaking to Jesus Christ himself." However, Fred was very comfortable in the shabby and highly cluttered, old and unpainted farmhouse where they lived and worked near Plainfield, Wisconsin.

Fran was as eccentric and brash as Fred was quiet and reserved. Raised by wealthy parents, she had enjoyed debutant status but delighted in shedding those pretenses for a life built around wildlife.

Probably one of the most famous tales among hundreds about the Hamerstroms took place when they were living in an old, weather beaten farmhouse north of Nece-dah in 1936 and working for the Resettlement Administration. It was 35 degrees below zero, and the water pump froze. While they had kerosene to start a fire, they couldn't find any rags to keep the fire going. What Fran did is best described by quoting her directly from her book *My Double Life*, published in 1994:

At the bottom of one wooden box I came upon a specially wrapped container, large and white and tied with narrow mauve ribbons. It was from Saks Fifth Avenue. It was my flame-colored velvet evening gown. Flame-color that picked up the golden glints of my hair; the low, soft cowl neck that Frederick considered so becoming; and the full, floor-length skirt that had floated in undulating swirls as we danced together under crystal chandeliers. I would never wear it again. I hurried down the stairs whistling and handed it to Andrew. His big hands felt the bulk of the material. He nodded and wrapped my dress around the pump. Alex poured kerosene, soaking the dress again and again. Then he reached in his shirt pocket for a match.

The high flames from her dress did the trick and restored the pump's function. As the men warmed themselves by the fire, Fran watched them through the kitchen window. "Frederick," she said, "stood a little apart, aristocratic and elegant, even in his worn field clothes. I could see the fine black eyebrows and his small, straight nose. He wasn't watching the flames. He watched my dress, and when it was gone he still looked at the pump. His face was inscrutable."

Fred's vehement discussion with a local land baron led to what Fran later called "the chicken wars." This rich patron told Fred that foxes were responsible for the lower prairie chicken numbers. When Fred argued that habitat was the key to wildlife abundance, not only was his opponent angry but the entire community erupted. Fred faced a town hall full of angry residents ready to lynch him. Fran was shunned in local stores. It took years before people were civil to them again.

Rumor and innuendo often directed animosity toward the Hamerstroms. One memorable incidence occurred in the 1960s when Fred received an alarming call from his University of Wisconsin employer requiring them to drive to Madison immediately. Unsure of the problem other than it concerned Fran, they dressed in their finest clothes and reported to the campus to face the music.



Top: Francis Hamerstrom with a rehabilitated golden eagle in 1965.

Bottom: Fredrick and Francis Hamerstrom.

PHOTOS: DNR FILE

The Gamekeepers

Sternly, the UW administrator said, "It's about your knitting. You've been seen on the street (meaning alongside a public road) knitting!" Fran always brought knitting along on the job when she was waiting for prairie chickens to enter the trap. Someone who saw her thought it was terrible that the taxpayer was paying her to knit on the job! Silly as the complaint was, Fran stopped the practice.

How do you describe such great, fun people in a paragraph or two? Well, you can't. You can only mention the unpainted, weather-beaten house, car-kill breakfasts Fran loved to spring on new guests, the "gaboon" title for helpers, the classy Parker double-barrel shotgun used for hunting, their huge, six-foot potbellied stove, and the spooky look of raptors peering down from a ceiling perch to try creating just a glimpse of these two glorious personalities of the conservation profession.

Fred died in 1989 and Fran in August 1998. They were both inducted into the Wisconsin Hall of Fame in 1996 (posthumously for Fred).

Richard Hunt and Friends

Dick Hunt worked as conservation aid while finishing his graduate work in 1952 before competing with about 50 others for a WCD wildlife biologist position. He and four others were hired.

Although he worked all over the state, Dick was based at the Horicon Area Headquarters for his entire career, becoming the chief waterfowl biologist in 1959. He was Wisconsin's representative on the Technical Section of the Mississippi Flyway Council for more than 20 years. He wrote numerous publications, and his contributions to wildlife science made him one of the profession's "biggies." He cited Jim Hale's and Ruth Hine's editing as the primary reason that his research writing and that of his peers became readable publications.

Dick's spirit and enthusiasm created his reputation as the cheerleader for the profession. Every speech he made to wildlife managers was passionate in praise and encouragement to "keep up the good work, be proud, and don't let the bastards get you down!" His ethical standards were of the highest order, and it pained him deeply when he saw state officials behaving poorly in a public forum.

Dick was a strong advocate for funding field research projects. Once, while listening to an administrator brag to the Wildlife Research Section about being on the "cutting edge" of technology, Dick remarked, "Hell, we aren't even on the handle!"

Throughout his career, Dick was the steady hand as the agency experienced wave after wave of controversy at Horicon. The rapid rise of Canada goose use, crop damage, landowner complaints, high hunter violation rates, marsh draw downs, botulism, and many similar events challenged research and management. Dick Hunt was always involved in the solutions to difficult and controversial problems of the day.

A classic story from the 1950s stemmed from a duck experiment that produced duck carcasses needing disposal. A warden friend invited to a cookout meal consisting of such ducks passed the information to his supervisor and resulted in an embarrassing citation for Dick's supervisor, Larry Jahn. A court action resulted, but he was exonerated because of the domestic classification of the mallards consumed. (That key court testimony was given by Professor Robert McCabe.)

Dick instituted a number of innovations during his career and credits his supervisors, Cy Kabat and Jim Hale, for giving him unwavering support. He coordinated U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "wing-bees" at the Poynette Game Farm in the 1960s and 1970s where biologists and wardens from all over the state were invited in to identify, age, and sex duck wings sent in by Wisconsin hunters.

During the 1960s, Dick became very aware of how poorly field wardens performed in identifying ducks in the hunter's bag. Wrongfully issued citations were common, and most wardens were uncomfortable with their novice abilities in the marsh. Dick approached the local warden, Tom Harelson, on the touchy topic, and he enthusiastically helped Dick establish an annual workshop to teach wardens how to



PHOTOS: DNR FILE

Dick Hunt banding a duck on Crex Meadows Wildlife Area in 1964.

identify various species of waterfowl. Dick mounted each species on a stick for ease in handling, and the “duck on a stick” program became an instant success.

In addressing biologists, wildlife managers, and wildlife technicians at their annual meeting in 2000, Dick paid tribute to wetland managers by saying, “My admiration for many managers is boundless. It was apparent they had a love for the out-of-doors and waterfowl. In-depth knowledge about many species of wildlife and insight into their management is evident. They were doing ecosystems, species, and biodiversity management long before the words became popular. They demonstrated inspiring work ethics, an uncommon amount of common sense, and the courage and will to get the job done. Whoever hired these men deserves our gratitude for the legacy they left. My superstars were Norm Stone, John Berkahn, Tom Hansen, and Oz Mattson.” Other biologists who worked with Dick, including Jim March and Bill Wheeler, carried on the waterfowl research challenge into the 1990s. Wheeler, Jerry Bartelt, and Ron Gatti continued the tradition through agency reorganization in 1996. After that time, not much has been heard of the program.

Dick Hunt and his brother Robert, who contributed at the same high level to state and national fisheries research and management, were inducted into the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame on April 21, 2012. They are the only brothers receiving that honor since the Hall was founded.

Ruth Louise Hine

A woman working in the field of conservation was almost unheard of in the 1970s, let alone the 1940s. It was, indeed, a man’s world early in the foundation of this new science. Ruth Hine not only got into the profession, she excelled to the top of the field.

Ruth Louise Hine was born in Columbus, Ohio, in the 1920s but moved to Orlando, Florida, shortly thereafter. Her family returned to Ohio before settling in Springfield, Massachusetts. She graduated from high school there in 1940.

She attended Connecticut College and graduated in 1944. After a brief job at Wesleyan University in cell research, she was attracted to Madison in 1947 by Aldo Leopold’s reputation. She became a teaching assistant in general zoology and invertebrate zoology at the University of Wisconsin.

Ruth completed her course work for her Ph.D. in 1949 and was hired as a conservation aid in the WCD by Research Bureau director Cy Kabat. She completed her thesis work on small animal communities in 1952. When a research job wasn’t available after she passed her civil service exam in 1953, Kabat used a vacant pathologist position to hire her as the state’s first female biologist. She replaced Jim Hale as Technical Bulletin editor in 1955 and drew accolades for 30 years.

Ruth was a superb writer, and her editing skills saved many a researcher their jobs because most had difficulty with technical writing. Her smooth way of correcting poor writing products kept fragile egos intact and always met the rigid standards required of Pittman-Robertson research projects. Virtually every researcher that published their projects during Ruth’s tenure credits her as the prime reason for producing a better product. Many of her Technical Bulletins attracted national awards.

Ruth’s strategic role in starting the state’s first endangered resources program was described in Chapter 10. She continued to support the program with numerous articles and speeches along with Technical Bulletin editing until her retirement in 1986.

Ruth said three of her most memorable accomplishments were “finding students with deep interests in certain species and working with them, pushing for leopard frog attention, and organizing that field inventory as well as getting information at the outset on various species from wildlife managers, fish managers, conservation wardens, and others so we would have a place to start.”

Ruth Hine died on February 23, 2010, and was inducted posthumously into the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame on April 24, 2010.



Ruth Hine.

PHOTOS: DNR FILE

The Gamekeepers

Creed and McCaffery

One cannot address Wisconsin's deer program or deer research without mentioning Bill Creed and Keith McCaffery. These two individuals are associated with these programs like Lombardi and Starr are to the Green Bay Packers. Creed, because of his age and his development of the sex-age-kill (SAK) formula, probably deserves recognition as the "senior deer biologist." However, McCaffery's extensive findings about whitetails and his long-term consultation role made him at least an equal partner.

Bill Creed grew up in Unity, Wisconsin, where his interest in wildlife began early in life. He attended the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point for undergraduate studies and earned his master's degree in wildlife biology at Penn State in 1955, served two years in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, and started working for the WCD as the district game manager at Woodruff in 1957. In October of 1959, he became the deer project leader under Art Doll, who led the entire forest game group. When Art was promoted to the Game Division in 1960, Bill took over as the forest game group leader until his retirement in 1991.

Creed recalled the coffee breaks at the old Black River Falls Area Headquarters as a career highlight because of the fun and the business occurring at those sessions. Attending were area game supervisor Stan DeBoer, area warden Chauncy Weitz, local warden Louis Radke, and staff biologist George "the brain man" Hartman.

Creed produced the SAK formula described in Chapter 5 but credited Art Doll with creation of the deer range measurement system in 1961 that gave meaning to over-winter goals identified in the administrative rules in 1962. However, Creed's talents were not just defined by deer parameters. His field studies of the bobcat published in the 1970s were not only vital for getting a handle on the wild population but became critical in defending trapping during later court challenges that went all the way to the Supreme Court.

Creed supervised the Stone Lake Grouse Project and early fisher studies. He also supervised Bruce Kohn on marten, deer, wolves, and bear projects; Jack Moulton on a ruffed grouse project; John Kubisiak at Sandhill on ruffed grouse, deer, and turkey projects; and Larry Gregg initially on the woodcock project and later on sharpshooters and ducks. Jim Hale was the boss, and Creed credited Jim for being a great supervisor and giving him a free hand to get the job done. Creed firmly believed that research done by the forest game group should support population and habitat management and would not approve a proposed research project unless it had strong management implications.

Creed also seemed to have a special talent for hiring and guiding extremely talented biologists because all of his staff received multiple awards over their careers. In fact, three of them went on to receive the Wisconsin Award from the state chapter of The Wildlife Society, the group's highest form of recognition.

Creed was a big dude, standing over six feet tall and carrying some 230 plus pounds. While he had a pretty good sense of humor, he had a tendency to be a little gruff. Bolstered by heated discussions about controversial issues, he got downright aggressive! In that state, most people who knew him feared him because he had the habit of punching his stub index finger (he had lost the finger tip in a V-belt accident as a kid) into the listener's chest. (About a week after one such discussion with Creed, John Keener actually showed some of the staff his bare chest displaying several black-and-blue marks from Creed's finger. Thereafter, we all kept our distance anytime Creed got all fired up).

Creed continued his love of hunting and fishing into his retirement years, often with his two sons. He died on June 25, 2010.

Keith McCaffery was always pleasant, even when engaged in heated discussions. Religious, a non-drinker, articulate, and possessing a keen sense of humor, Keith was the perfect complement to Creed. He joined the staff after earning his master's degree in forestry and wildlife from the University of Minnesota in 1963. He started as a biologist in Black River Falls but was transferred to Rhinelander in 1964. He would spend the rest of his career there at what he described as being "the principal apologist



Bill Creed.

D. JOHNSON

for the Wisconsin herd monitoring and harvest system.” He continued to serve almost daily as a volunteer for several years after his retirement in January 2000.

Keith produced 84 publications and reports during his stint with the department and praised Ruth Hine for her guidance and professional editing. His first major study was on deer and forest openings in 1969 that convinced game managers that non-winter habitat was important for deer. Other reports covered deer food habits, openings management, and road kill indices. He also was the tactful partner with Creed in helping game managers with SAK calculations, deer range measurements, and general problem solving.

Keith's arrival on the deer scene was perfectly timed with the rise of Wisconsin's prominence as a leader in deer management, often representing the state at various meetings and speaking at numerous conferences. He was the principal liaison to the Great Lakes Deer Group and Midwest Deer and Turkey Study Group. He was a university associate with UW-Stevens Point and served on the Advisory Board to Kemp Biological Station, UW-Madison (at Trout Lake, Vilas County).

Keith served a secondary role of looking out for the welfare of wildlife managers. At the annual meeting, he commonly assumed the responsibility of yelling the warning “Creed is coming! Creed is coming!” to alert Keener and others that the finger-pointing nemesis was arriving.

Keith was personally embarrassed when the wintering deer herd topped 1.7 million after his retirement. While records indicate that herd control was lost after 1988, he thought the herd build up actually started in the winter of 1991–92 and continued to increase when he was Forest Game Research Group leader from 1991 to 1996. He empathized with today's biologists trying desperately to get those numbers down and continues to volunteer his talents to help with this effort.

Keith has expressed the view that chronic wasting disease only adds to the dilemma and will be with the herd for a long time. He has also pointed out that “the high levels of winter-feeding by well meaning people are creating subsidized patches of deer populations, causing disparities in herd and harvest distribution. We cannot effectively manage deer in the presence of baiting and feeding.”

While enjoying retirement with his wife, Josie (married in 1961), Keith still spends time at the DNR's Rhinelander office each week volunteering his skills and vast experience to help the agency address new deer program challenges. He has been an active leader in the Professional Wildlife Management Committee of the American Archery Council, is currently vice president of the Alliance for Public Wildlife (Canadian-American group), and is very active in his local church.

John F. Kubisiak

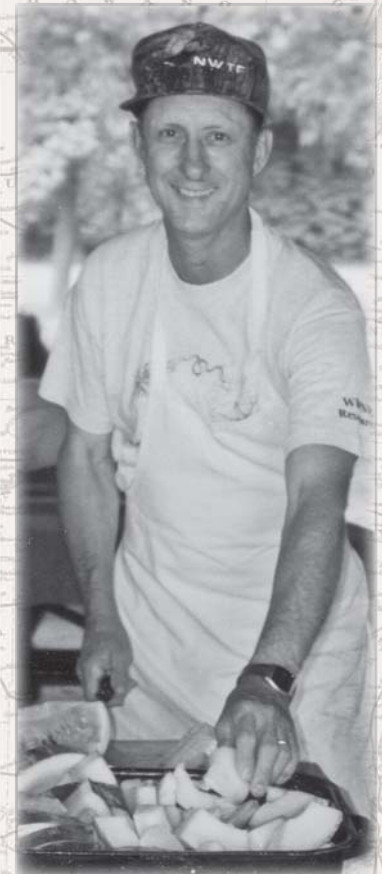
John Kubisiak is yet another great talent from the research ranks. A very bright biologist with a pleasant, upbeat personality, John seemed to be always helping someone with something while he was doing his own labor-intensive work. He also credited much of his success to Ruth Hine, Jim Hale, and Bill Creed. A great picnic organizer, he could whip up food for hundreds and was always embarrassed when he would have to ask for \$2 or some such fee to help pay for the lavish affair.

John earned his B.S. degree from the University of Michigan in 1961. He joined the department in February 1962, first working in fish research at Oshkosh and then water inventory work in Madison that summer. In September, he was hired as a seasonal wildlife biologist working for Art Doll's Forest Game Group at Black River Falls. He became an assistant game manager at Ladysmith on February 1, 1965, but transferred back to research in 1966.

John spent the bulk of his 34-year career with wildlife research at the Sandhill Wildlife Area compiling more data on ruffed grouse than anyone in the Upper Midwest except, perhaps, the legendary Gordon Gullion of Minnesota. He spent thousands of hours in the field locating drumming male grouse on several thousand acres each spring and chasing hens with broods in the summer. He trapped and banded 1,193 grouse from 1978 to 1982 using cloverleaf traps that required laborious axe



Keith McCaffery.



John Kubisiak.

The Gamekeepers

swinging efforts clearing brush and laying out 100 feet of one-foot high funnel fencing to lure grouse into the traps.

John also conducted deer studies within the Sandhill Wildlife Area from 1963 to 1995. In addition to evaluating deer habitat relationships, he spent countless hours in bloodied coveralls aging deer and recording hunters' observations of deer and hunting experiences. He also headed up the DNR's wild turkey research portion of southwestern Wisconsin restoration from 1987 to 1995 assisted by biologists Neil Paisley (Sandhill Project supervisor) and Bob Wright (later, with the Minnesota DNR).

Listing all of John's career awards is too cumbersome. The number of awards he received from the Ruffed Grouse Society, the Wisconsin Chapter of The Wildlife Society, the Bureau of Wildlife Management, and the Wisconsin Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation are special tributes to his contributions. A highlight for John was the dedication of a 1,471-acre tract within the Wood County Wildlife Area in 2004 dedicated as the "John Kubisiak Ruffed Grouse and Woodcock Management Area." It was sponsored by the DNR and the Ruffed Grouse Society.

John authored or co-authored over 40 publications during his career. Principle publications included *Oak Forests: A Management Opportunity for Ruffed Grouse and Other Wildlife*, 1989; three technical papers presented at the seventh National Wild Turkey Symposium, 1996; a publication entitled *Wild Turkey Ecology and Management in Wisconsin*, 2001 (lead author with three others); and the book *Sandhill Whitetails: Providing New Perspective for Deer Management*, 2001 (lead author with five others).

In retirement, in addition to spending more time with his wife of over 40 years, Clara, John serves on the DNR wild turkey and ruffed grouse-woodcock advisory committees. He is one of 10 professional consultants providing advice to the Quality Deer Management Association and is a life-member of the Wildlife Society and the Ruffed Grouse Society. John has been a big brother to many young boys and is currently on the Board of Directors of the Big Brothers and Big Sisters organization.

He and Clara have catered more meals to more organizations and special events than he can remember. They are both active in the Friends of Sandhill organization, and John gives freely of his time to the Learning is Forever program at UW-Stevens Point.



John Kubisiak.

The Technicians

It can be said that behind every successful wildlife manager, there's a good wildlife technician. Probably no position was more underrated or underappreciated in the business of wildlife management than the individual with this title. Again, many of them should be named and described, but that simply is not possible.

The tech title materialized just before the 1967 reorganization of the agency as a way of creating upward mobility in career paths for senior conservation aids. Four levels were established (I-IV) to optimize their career opportunities.

Wildlife techs are the field grunts in the profession, usually skilled in farming work, heavy equipment operations, driving trucks, chain-sawing, fencing, posting, and similar activities. When game managers became more office bound because of an increasing bureaucratic workload in the 1970s and 1980s, techs had to pick up the slack. They served very capably on species advisory committees, gave talks at professional wildlife meetings and at public meetings, and responded to the news media. In addition, they handled land acquisition contacts, sharecropping contracts, work planning, and other "manager-type duties."

The lack of recognition undoubtedly affected the morale of techs statewide. Mike Johnson, the tech working out of Balsam Lake in today's Northern Region expressed that sentiment during a casual conversation in 2002. He said, "The bureau director was always making speeches about game managers, but he ignored wildlife technicians. That oversight always made me very angry, and I blame the director for failing to recognize our important role in the agency." Mike did acknowledge that being invited to the statewide meeting helped his morale some and so did the award system. Mike received the Wildlife Technician of the Year Award in 1992.

Mike's point was well taken, but how do you give appropriate credit to all those deserving this recognition? Glen Kloes at Shawano worked for the department for 38

years and was legendary. Always known for his inquiring mind, he was once seen by Harry Libby reading Research Report 45 (*Techniques for Wetland Management*) while sitting in the cab of an idling D-8 caterpillar. Duane Ketter at Horicon had the reputation of making his bosses look good because he was often doing the bosses' work. Research technician Jim Ashbrenner may have set national records for the number of wildlife species studied in his 43-year career.

Guys earning college degrees like Tom Becker, John Dunn, Mark Randall, Harvey Halvorsen, Bruce Bacon, Kevin Morgan, Ken Jonas, and Dick Nickoli toughed it out as technicians for years and earned rare promotions to game manager positions. More undoubtedly are deserving of this type of promotion, but those opportunities don't happen very often.

Techs John Nelson at La Crosse and Al Cornell at Tower Hill State Park had to absorb critical turkey program work on top of their normal duties and willingly worked the extra time without any recognition. In particular, John Nelson, red suspenders and matching beard aside, deserved special accolades because of his extraordinary work without limelight on turkey restoration described in Chapter 11. The countless unpaid nights and weekend work put in by both men will never be known.

Certainly the technicians earning the Wildlife Technician of the Year Award shown in Appendix H deserve special recognition, but what of the rest of them slugging it out with the day to day challenges of emergencies, broken equipment, complaining sharecroppers, limited budgets, unending paperwork, and a host of other add-on burdens to routine work? They all should get a public pat-on-the-back for a job well done.

Wives and Husbands

Like the certainty that wildlife technicians didn't get enough credit for their good work, wildlife manager's and wildlife researcher's spouses got even less. Late and missed meals, nighttime and weekend absences, telephone disturbances, and short-changed families were the norm for this half of the marriage partnership.

Interviews with old-time managers revealed wives who spent many lonely nights and weekends without their mates but who had high tolerance for their husband's plight simply because it was during a time when society expected the woman to be in the home and subservient to the male bread-winner. That attitude probably held through the 1970s, but things began to change with the women's liberation movement and when women began to work outside the home with more frequency in the 1980s.

Mary Stroebe was far from typical as a wife when she said, "You have to get along with your husband. Just accept him the way he is." Mary was rugged enough and had the interest to join her husband in a lot of outdoor activity, thus mitigating some of her husband's many absences. However, not many wives have that interest. In fact, of the 40 interviews I conducted with older managers, Jeanie Batha (Carl's wife) was the only other one to do so. Looking over 100 other spouses, I know Doris Rusch hunts hard as does Charlie Killian's wife Lori, but of the other biologist wives that I know, no one else does.

Spouses of wildlife managers and researchers had to put up with conditions and circumstances causing stress similar to any other business or profession. Usually it was the wife who had to take care of the kids because the husband—striving to be successful at his career—was never around. When he was home, he was often preoccupied with some work problem troubling his mind. At the dinner table, rather than catching up with what the family had been doing, he would find himself spouting off about some DNR happening. Families got short-changed.

As the agency matured into the 1990s, union standards, overtime pay, a mixed gender work force, women's liberation, and a larger bureaucracy combined to change the generational culture. Men and women began to understand each other a lot better as well as the important value of the family unit. While the overall results were positive in human development terms, the DNR and wildlife management profession probably lost a considerable manpower commitment beyond 4:30 p.m.



Al Cornell.



John Nelson.

The Gamekeepers

Despite these societal changes and recent overtime pay, wildlife manager and researcher spouses still should get credit for tolerating the demands of a bureaucracy. It's not only the absence from the home that stresses marriages, it's what is brought home in the form of "job pressures" like a little bit of paperwork, a couple of phone calls, and visits from coworkers to discuss some work-related issue. To those people, I pass on this advice: Remember, you never hear of someone on their deathbed saying, "Gee. I sure wished I would have spent more time at work!"

The University Connection

The University of Wisconsin at Madison and Stevens Point contributed significantly albeit quietly to conservation in general and wildlife management in particular. The entire profession acknowledges Aldo Leopold as the "father of wildlife management," but numerous extremely bright and dedicated counterparts were huge contributors to the art through academic accomplishments, trained students, public education, research advancements, and outstanding cooperation with their sister agency, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Dr. Robert McCabe was one of the first generation of Leopold students who had tremendous influence in the field of wildlife management. A feisty Irishman who attended many volatile deer meetings with Leopold in the 1940s, McCabe chaired the Department of Wildlife Ecology from 1952 to 1979.

Dr. Joseph Hickey (1948–77), Dr. Robert Ellarson (1950–78), Dr. Lloyd Keith (1959–83), Dr. Orin Rongstad (1967–90), Dr. Robert Ruff (1970–2001), and Dr. Stanley Temple (1976 to present) were regular contributors to state wildlife programs through advisory councils, special field projects, and the students they trained who were eventually hired by the DNR.

Dr. Donald Rusch (1973–99) had an especially close liaison with the Bureau of Wildlife Management and the Bureau of Research. Heading up the Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit for over 20 years, Don enabled many DNR wildlife managers to be exposed to the tundra of Manitoba studying Canada geese. His ruffed grouse study in the same province also created a unique outdoor lab experience for wildlife managers over the years.

Don Rusch believed very strongly that Wisconsin sportsmen were responsible for providing the wealth of wildlife and fish resources the state enjoys today and he joined in those pursuits with relish. His wife, Doris, who was also a DNR wildlife manager, accompanied Don on many of his adventures around the world and was a terrific contributor to wildlife management in her own right. Don unexpectedly died of a heart attack while hunting on September 12, 1999.

Dr. Scott Craven (1978 to present), who served as the Chair of the Wildlife Ecology Department at the UW-Madison for many years, has also had a very special relationship with the DNR. Scott has been involved in wildlife extension projects for over 20 years and has established numerous personal friendships with DNR personnel. His extensive knowledge about wild turkeys, deer, and Canada geese as well as the Wisconsin hunting fraternity has led to many DNR committee appointments, and the resultant studies have improved the department's wildlife management program immeasurably.

The staff of the Department of Wildlife Ecology at UW-Stevens Point also has contributed through direct consultation and study as well as through their student projects. Dr. Daniel Trainer, Jr., former dean of the department and longtime Natural Resources Board member, was a leader actively engaged in emerging wildlife issues in the 1960s through the 1980s.

Other UW-Stevens Point contributions came from Dr. Raymond Anderson, who provided numerous cooperative projects varying from frog to bear research. Professors Lyle Nauman, Neil Payne, and Eric Anderson and their graduate students also contributed heavily, especially in monitoring reintroduction efforts in bear, marten, fisher, and wolf studies. Currently, Dr. Christine L. Thomas is the associate dean and professor of resource management at the college. In addition to spearheading the "Women in the Outdoors" program, Dr. Thomas also serves as a member of the Natural Resources Board.



Don Rusch in Manitoba, 1990.



Scott Craven.

Memorial

Many of those who served the public and represented the wildlife resources of Wisconsin died during the first 80 years of the profession's existence. All gave dedicated and influencing parts of their lives to wildlife conservation. To name only a few would be a disservice to the accomplishments of others, but two exceptions are warranted: Paul Brandt and Kent Klepinger.

Paul Brandt

Wildlife biologist Paul Brandt died unexpectedly at age 60 in September 2006. His passing likely would have received little notice were it not for a stunning gift to the Natural Resources Foundation. Paul had quietly created a Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Fund with a \$25,000 endowment gift in 2005 with the proceeds to be used for habitat management on public lands. His additional gift from his estate after he died increased the endowment to more than \$600,000.

Brandt left an impression on his entire peer group most unusual in our ranks. He was not very social, but we all were well aware of the high professional standards he kept, and most of us had received harsh lectures from him on some wildlife management principle he thought deserved attention. While some of us, including Carl Batha, Tom Howard, Bill Ishmael, and Allen Cornell, considered Paul a friend, none of us were his hunting or fishing buddies or privy to anything about his private life. We only learned about his 19-year relationship with his friend Ruth Bauer and that he had a brother named Neal after he passed away.

Paul Brandt replaced me at the Wilson State Nursery station in 1972, so I've been acquainted with him for a long time. I received firm admonishment from him for a few years as he corrected my office procedures, completed partial files, adjusted wildlife survey choices, purchased public land where I failed, and otherwise turned an inefficient office into a productive one.

Paul had excellent credentials for the job. He obtained his B.S. degree at the University of Michigan in 1968 and served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam from 1968 to 1970.

He earned his master's degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1972. He loved the Wisconsin River and centered his entire life on its upkeep. He became a land acquisition zealot, knowing the importance of protecting land from development harmful to wildlife. He not only learned the names of all the landowners within project boundaries, but their likes and dislikes, who their relatives were and where they lived, the likelihood of their selling, and his plan for the next contact.

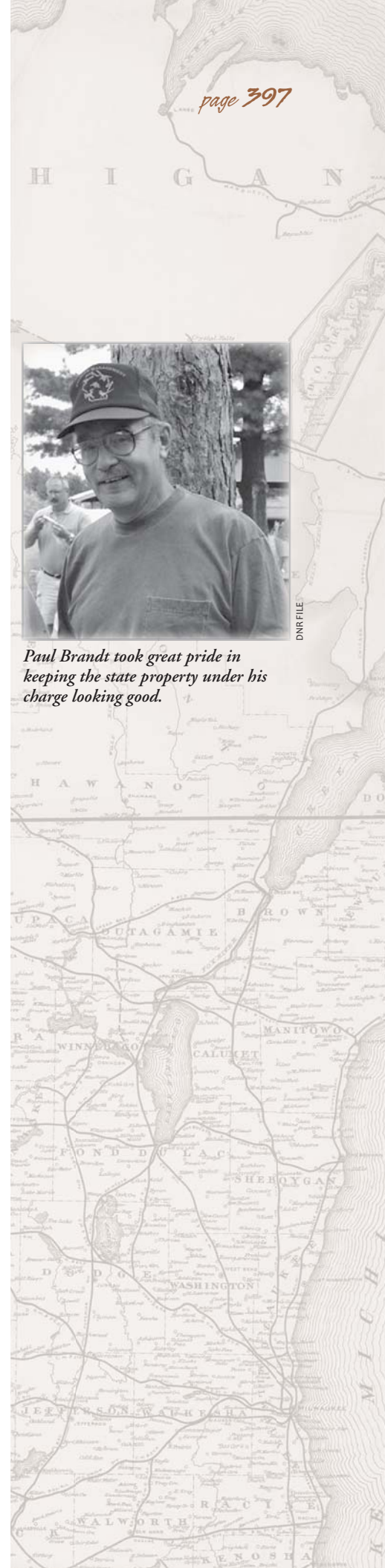
Weekends were a time of rest for most of us but not Paul. He patrolled the wildlife area boundaries alongside the Wisconsin River in his own vehicle, recording notes on recreational use, wildlife observed, and future maintenance needs as well as picking up a truckload of trash found along the way. He never requested any compensation for this work and chastised those of us who suggested it was justified. In fact, Paul refused to file an expense voucher for noon lunches and said, "that's foolishness! Where else is this practice used in the private sector?"

Paul took great pride in keeping the state property under his charge looking good. Signage was exemplary, parking lots graded and litter free, trails mowed, boundary fences taut and on exact legal boundaries, dikes repaired, and unsightly areas restored. A longtime Leopold follower, Paul took his "save the parts" and "we are just part of the whole" messages to heart. He confided in me that he often walked to a bluff top overlooking the river to contemplate when job pressures were intense.

Paul received a special River Champion award posthumously from the Wisconsin River Alliance in 2008. A plaque in his honor was placed in one of his favorite haunts near Millville and dedicated in a ceremony conducted May 20, 2008. As Ruth Bauer released a rehabilitated red-tailed hawk at the site, you could almost hear Paul say, "You're making too big of a deal over this! You should be spending your time taking care of wildlife habitat!" Well, Paul, maybe now we'll be better at it?



Paul Brandt took great pride in keeping the state property under his charge looking good.



The Gamekeepers

Kent Klepinger

The wildlife management profession and DNR veterans alike mourned the loss of a conservation stalwart on April 22, 2008. Kent E. Klepinger died suddenly while driving from his winter home in Punta Gorda, Florida, to his Stoughton residence. He left his wife of 52 years, Barbara, and four children: Gretchen (Burkett), S. Johanna, Jill (Zinke) and Jonathan.

The man was known as “Klep” to his DNR cohorts, and the public stumbled over his last name. I’ve seen his mail addressed to Klumpanger, Klissinger, and Crapslinger. Klep always claimed I was exaggerating (I wasn’t). His intellect combined with a quick wit established a reputation in the state agency enduring to all who knew him.

He was born and raised near West Milton, Ohio, and went to Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, where he met and married Barbara Spitler of Eaton, Ohio. After graduation from college, he worked on his master’s degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison before being hired as a conservation aid by the Wisconsin Conservation Department in 1957 assigned to Horicon Marsh.

Klep passed his game manager exam and advanced to become a game manager in Fond du Lac County in 1961, working primarily on land acquisition at White River, Grand River, Poygan, and Eldorado wildlife areas before being promoted as assistant PL-566 coordinator in Madison in 1967. He joined the Bureau of Game Management staff in 1969, serving briefly as assistant division administrator in 1972 before returning to the game management staff in 1973. He became deputy director of the Bureau of Wildlife Management in 1976, was promoted to director of the Bureau of Research in 1981, and retired in 1990.

Klep was the author’s supervisor from 1976 to 1981 when we both served under Bureau of Wildlife Management Director John Keener. Keener believed that social contact with his staff improved moral and performance, so monthly social events on a rotating schedule of homes soon had all of us very comfortable with each other. When Klep and Barb hosted these events, we were exposed to Klep’s baritone singing some humorous ditty while Barb reluctantly accompanied him on the piano. Laughter was the common denominator at these sessions.

Klep was the catalyst for keeping the chemistry of the staff’s diverse personalities productive and upbeat. His humor was keen, and he used it at times of tension that, no doubt, was crucial to staff and field morale. His wildlife management professional ties remained strong even after he left the program to direct the Bureau of Research. His social ties also continued, and all of his former bureau staffers kept in contact after retirement, including annual gatherings in Florida.

While Klep was a dedicated public servant and always liked his job, the love of his life was his wife, Barbara. He wrote his life’s story before he died, and I was lucky enough to read it. I was quite taken aback by his open expression of complete, unbridled love for his wife. His life’s story was intertwined with hers, and all else seemed rather trivial including his professional career.

Klep liked to make wine, and once bottled his product under the name “Tractor Boy.” It wasn’t until late in life he revealed the origin of that moniker to his friends. As a teenager living on a farm outside of town, he didn’t have a car, so he’d drive into town on a tractor to socialize with his friends. On one occasion, he asked a very attractive girl for a date, and she answered, “Not with you, tractor boy!” Leave it to Klep to enjoy that subtle humor 60 years later. We’ll miss him.



Klep's sense of humor was keen his entire life.